The TRAVELS of PHOEBE ANN

ALBERT LAWRENCE

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The Travels of Phoebe Ann

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"Zekiel! Zekiel! Here's your old friend, Phœbe Ann."

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BY

ALBERT LAWRENCE

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This Book is Dedicated

FIRSTLY:

TO THOSE WHO LOVE A LAUGH AT THE FOIBLES
AND WEAKNESSES OF HUMAN NATURE

AND

SECONDLY:

TO THOSE WHO SEE A GRAIN OF TRUTH
IN EVERY VIEW SET FORTH BY MAN

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Illustrations

"Zekiel! Zekiel! Here's your old friend, Phoebe Ann" *Frontispiece*

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THE TRAVELS OF PHOEBE ANN

CHAPTER I.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,
December 2nd, 19—.

My dear Susanna:

I am in California—the land of sunshine and flowers! I can now enjoy the country "where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile." But oh! Susanna, the time I had getting here!

When I got out of our part of Vermont, spinning on toward New York, I began to sit up plumb straight and open my eyes.

Says I to myself: "Lucy Jane and Hezekiah"—my nephew and his wife that I set out to see—"ain't never been in this part of the country, and they'll be asking me all sorts of questions, living out there in the wil-

derness, which I'll be bound to answer." So I noted all I could as we went along.

When we landed in New York City, sakes alive! I thought I'd just go plumb crazy! You remember Lyddy Skinner at the Sunday-school picnic last year, after she'd been on that gee-whiz thing, with all the camels and horses and tigers, that went round and round? Well, when she got off, after being flown around in such shape that her breath was took out of her, she wobbled just like a man in his cups. That is precisely the way I felt when the train pulled into that depot.

I shall not attempt to describe my transportation across the great city of New York. I resigned my all to Providence, and closed my eyes, when they whirled me in a car way up in the air. No need to tell me any more, Susanna, how the angels feel when they take their first flight. I have flitted and know all about it.

Everybody seemed to be in such an awful hurry that I felt afraid to ask any questions, but at length, I made bold to inquire of a policeman where I should get my train.

He told me I should have to cross the ferry before I could get the train, and gave me directions how to get there. I won't weary you telling about the time I had to find my way to the ferry, nor of the risks I ran of being trampled to death in crossing the streets.

Finally, however, I reached it and walked into a big, spacious room, with high ceilings and plenty of seats. As my feet were getting kind of tired, and my arms worn down to the bone with all my bundles, I sat down on the seat nearest to hand.

One of the most curious things to me was a great big gate that a man opened, every few minutes, at the other side of the room. People was that anxious to spend their money that they come in through a little narrow place, where every one that don't pay is sassed on the spot till they do, to be allowed to run into a big room, look around, and run out! But for my part, I meant to sit right in that spot till they called out the train for California. I had no notion to play "Ring around a Rosy!"

Meanwhile, I looked about to see the attractions of the place. Right in front of

me was a big, glass case with books, magazines and candy spread out, and on the other side some real pretty posies.

"Well, I do declare," says I to myself, "who would have thought that three cents apiece from every individual that comes in here could support the giving away of such nice things! So I'll just step over and make a selection, before my train arrives."

Accordingly I trotted up to the glass case and says in complimentary tones:

"You've got a real nice stock this morning. I think I must encourage the good work by taking some."

"Yes'm," says the man briskly, "what shall I put up for you?"

"Well," says I, ruminating like, "you might just throw together a dozen of them largest American Beauty roses, a bunch of the largest violets, about two dozen, or such a matter, of them fine carnations, and scatter a few maiden hair ferns among them for effect. That is, if so much is allowed a single person,"—I added, kind of conscious I was taking away a great deal for my three cents.

"Just as much as you like, madam," says

he, real pert and glib-like—"we have a large assortment of all kinds to choose from today."

With that he arranged the most beautiful bouquet you ever see in your life, putting it in a beautiful box, tied with lavender-colored satin ribbon.

"That'll be $5.25," says the man.

"It'll be *what?*" I says out loud,—so excited that I near dropped.

"Well," says the man, kind of apologizing in his manner, "this time of the year, being so near Thanksgiving, you know, flowers are pretty high."

"High!" says I, "high! I thought you was giving them away. My good man," says I, leaning over the counter and looking him full in the eye, "Phoebe Ann Lysander wouldn't give you $5.25 for everything you've got on top, beside, or underneath your counter; no, nor for the glass cases included, nor yet," says I, waxing eloquent, "for this whole building in its entirety!" Giving vent to this righteous judgment, I turned my back full upon him and walked off.

Going back to my bundles, I see the seat beside them occupied by a little modest-

looking woman in black. Seeing the rightful owner approaching she looked up and smiled, and moved to the next seat.

"Could you tell me what time the train for California arrives?" I asked.

"Why, no," she answered with a real bright smile. Do you know anything that cheers the heart, when you're kind of down-hearted, discouraged, and lonesome, so much as a smile? Them were my thoughts as she continued—"But if you will go with me I will see that you get safely across the ferry and onto your train, as I have a long time to wait for mine."

"Thank you," says I, "I will consider it quite a favor."

After a few more remarks the man swung the gate open once more, and I see my companion preparing to get up.

"Let me help you with your bundles," says she, with another of those bright smiles which began to thaw out the cold regions of my heart. Her little delicate hands looked like they couldn't carry anything, but she took my bandbox and paper bag; so we got along right smart.

We landed safe on the other side, by special Providence, I feel sure; and by my companion's help I reached the waiting room for my train, at last.

But isn't it strange that the people having the most trouble and sorrow are the ones most worth knowing? The little woman who landed me safe in my train was one of these, and she told me some of it. I shall never again feel like rebelling at the thought of not staying in the sunshine all the time, now that I know what rich tones the shadows bring out in anybody. That smile alone is worth all the hard times she has had to go through to gain, for the help and comfort it is to a lone woman on a journey.

When the porter took me to my place I felt that tuckered out I just sat down and had a good cry. What would I not have given to have seen my dear partner then, you and all the folks! The song Lyddy Skinner sang last Sunday,—"I'm sighing for that country," rang in my mind. I could almost see the pews, straight and cushionless, of our little country church, with its cemetery lying quiet beside it, with the names in it

even more familiar than the faces around it,—and my dear partner sitting alone and desolate in our own seat, which has belonged to the family for generations. This, of course, made the tears flow all the faster.

Well, after I had had my cry out, I began to sit up and look about me. Also my stomach began to warn me it had been abused shamefully, and now demanded something to fill the aching void. Looking at my watch, I found it was after four o'clock.

I dived under the seat for my lunch box and found it—gone! Just to think, Susanna, that the lunch I had planned and worked on for three days before starting, and used good flour and eggs in making the biscuits and cake, should fill the mouth of some one else! The fruit, too, I canned with such care! If only I had took two of them jars of peaches that's beginning to ferment!—So I sat bewildered for a minute; it seemed my vexations would never end. But when the stomach's empty the temper soon rises, and I found mine reaching the boiling point.

I begun to glare upon the people sitting round about me. "Who knows," I thought,

"hearing of the good cookery of Phoebe Ann Lysander, of Wayneville, and wanting to save their own pockets, which one of these people has appropriated my biscuits and cakes and preserves?" But every one around looked blandly innocent and surprised at my suspicious glances at their belongings.

Finally, being able no longer to hold my wrath, I says out loud and distinct:

"I s'pose no one has seen a box of lunch! I laid it, with my own hands, under this very seat I'm setting on. As I'm kind of faint, I'd be much obliged if some one could bring it forth to view! To be sure, I put bad eggs in the cake and cornstarch for flour in the biscuits, and if the peaches was a little mouldy and fermenting-like, I considered it no one's business but my own."

The people around me begun to cough and choke and had very sudden need of their handkerchiefs. I continued to glare and they continued to choke, and some had sudden calls to other parts of the car, and to hunting for lost articles on the floor.

After a minute, seeing my distress and rising anger, a tall, thin man, that I hadn't seen

before, in the seat just opposite me, says in a bland and fatherly tone of voice: "The porter put your box in the basket, madam, just over your head."

Rising in my seat I courtesied to them all, and says:

"Asking your pardon, let's all be friends again; and to you, mister, who I s'pose is one of the mighty high-lords of this road"—I judged this by his long-tailed coat, the like of which Ephraim only wears on Sundays—"I bow in humble gratitude."

I thought the man looked kind of pleased and admiring like at me, but the rest of the people only bowed and looked at each other. How little I then knew what was to follow with that same identical man! But let every evil day take care of its own is what I always think, and so to the main occasion.

Opening my box I took out my table-cloth first, for I always like to feel to home. Spreading it over the seat facing me, I proceeded to set out my food in appetizing fashion. Having set it all out in order I proceeded to draw forth my bottle of coffee, which I had used a dark green bottle for,

and leaned it up against the back of the seat so it couldn't fall over.

Happening to glance sidewise at the mighty high-lord of the road, I see him roll his eyes upwards, as though he had a pain in his inwards. Thinks I: "Maybe his wife forgot to give him something to eat, and the sight of this here lunch is ravishing his organs." My heart began to melt with tender thoughts as I thought of my dear partner setting out on a journey with never a bite to ease the gnawings of his appetite, and a big lunch like mine near him. So, bowing kind of pleasant, says I:

"I suppose you have just come from a banquet, but I'd feel mighty honored if you could stoop to take a bite of lunch with me. It would seem more homey-like."

With that he rose with alacrity and come over to my seat. Pushing along I made room for him to set down beside me. Now, Susanna, you needn't look shocked and shrug your shoulders, because you know I wouldn't do it to any ordinary man; but this man was higher than ordinary mortals, and probably owned most of the road.

Says I: "My lunch is very humble, but what there is to it, you're welcome. Lay to."

At that he laid to! I never see, in all my born days, biscuits and cakes, sandwiches and eggs slide down anybody's throat in such haste. Preserves and pickles, crackers and cheese, didn't have a chance to say good-bye to each other in the light before they met again in the dark caverns of that man's inwards. Seeing all my hope of sustenance for the next five days disappearing, or the best and freshest part of it, in one meal, I plucked up courage to put up a mild rebuke.

"Sir," says I, for I didn't know his name then, "don't you think we've give our stomachs enough to do for one night?" I thought at this he looked kind of abashed, but in a minute he appeared real glib and says:

"Well, seeing as I had such a hearty dinner, it might be as well to only indulge in a light lunch this evening."

Light lunch! and me relying on the food already laying in that man's stomach for life for two days!

"Yes," says I, real cheerful,—though you

may believe me I didn't feel as gay as I spoke, "I think your views be right, and we will just drink some of the contents of the bottle and then clean up a bit before the light's lit."

"I'm glad you agree with my views," says he, "may you always be so broadminded! But as to the bottle, sister, to drink is against the rules of my order."

"Mercy!" I gasped, now convinced that that was the reason he had eaten so much, since he was denied the blessing of drinking, "you don't drink? Why my partner and I drink every day of our lives, yes, a gallon a day," says I.

"Good Lord!" ejaculated the man, holding up both hands, "a gallon a day!" and he just sat and looked at me and groaned.

He continued groaning and rolling his eyes and then begun to grow purple in the face, from such excess of feeling, I suppose. Wondering if the food he had eaten was going to bring on apoplexy, and me be held for a murderer, I grabbed the bottle of coffee and pulling the cork emptied about a third of it into a cup. Having no smelling salts I

pressed that up towards his nose. Well, Susanna, maybe you won't believe me, but I never see a man come to so quick in my life.

"Um, um," says he, "that's good!" Open popped his eyes, and diving for that bottle, he drunk the whole of it! Yes m'am! every single drop went gurgling down that man's throat, to my wrath and consternation; for here was not only food gone, but drink as well.

"Well," says I, kind of dry and sarcastic-like, "seems as if you was kind of born again! A minute since and you told me you never drunk, and now you've not only finished your drink but mine in the bargain!"

"I ought not to have done it," says he, sorrowful-like.

"Well," says I, sort of mollified, "after all it was only coffee, and maybe I can get the bottle filled up again before I reach my destination."

"Oh," says he, in the same tone of voice, "it isn't that, but it's against the rules of my order!"

"Well," I spurted out, "if I was you I'd

just throw the rules of that there order, whatever it be, so far overboard that they'd never rise to the surface to accuse me again! No order on earth has got the right to tell us to disobey our Creator. An engine can just as well run without oil as we can without water!"

"O sister," says he, "you don't understand! Our Word of Wisdom says it is not good to use hot drink, as this is meant for the washing of the body, and I've taken coffee!"

"Well," says I, "seeing as you're so particular, it seems to me you have filled both obligations. You have tasted, it is true, but the liquid has also been used to wash your body with, if you admit your lips to be a part of such, and you have took not hot, only a drink of cold coffee!"

With that he kind of brightened up, while looking at me with admiring eyes, he says: "What an addition you would be!"

"No, sir!" says I, in firm and determined tones, "I'm not adding myself to any order that takes away my coffee from me!"

He didn't go on to explain then what he meant. That was to come later.

I begun to pack up my lunch again, and the man seeing that no more refreshment was coming his way, said he would not hinder me from my work. But he added that he hoped to have good talks with me on the way out; he did admire a woman of common sense and spirit. Of course, Susanna, I don't allow but what his flattery kind of pleased me, he had such a benignant look. He was going as far as Salt Lake City, he allowed.

Getting my things all put together, I settled down for a good rest. Feeling sort of contemplative, I leaned back in my seat and put my head against the back of it, even if it was red plush; and was soon in the land of dreams.

When I awoke, refreshed after my trip into dreamland, I begun to look around for a little sociability. Seeing a woman back of me on the other side of the car talking to the high-mighty lord of the road, thinks I: "I'll just sit here and watch that woman!"—and I began to feel a very peculiar interest in that same long-coated man—"and see if her charms be equal to mine!" Just as I was beginning to pine for my green sofa at

home, I was roused from my meditations by the porter coming in, brisk-like, as though he had an important duty to perform. "Maybe," thinks I, "he's going to put out the lights for the night." Then I see him catch hold of the upper part of the car and give it a yank. "My," thinks I, "he's mad! If he don't pull this car to pieces it'll be because he's stopped first." But Susanna Moses!—the wall above the windows was made to be yanked down, and then I see, with curtains dangling over it, the nicest bed!

Retiring to my bed, I pulled the curtains tight to and taking the package of safety-pins out of my reticule, I pinned them from top to bottom, and then climbed onto the bunk to undress. I lay down and for the first time in my life I said my prayers in bed. With that I lay back contented, but dreamed of cowboys and Indians all night long.

In the morning I dressed with great care. I put on my violet kimono, black skirt and fancy little white cap on top of my carefully dressed hair, same as we do in Wayneville. But bless you, Susanna, people don't wear these things in this part of the world!

When I issued forth from my bunk—and I tell you it was hard work getting dressed on your bed,—I thought I looked pretty fine. That was before I had seen the rest. After, I thought I would give anything to dress over again! Women appeared in gowns made by tailors, same as in the fashion book, mostly. Some had their Sunday shirtwaists on. No one but me had a cap on and that made everybody look at me all at once, and as I walked down the car, which by the way is dreadful hard walking, I heard one of the young ladies say: "Wonder if she's a nurse?"

But my long-coat looked with admiring eyes on my trim form, and said "Good morning," with a real friendly air.

It now being time for breakfast I once more pulled out my lunch box and set to work to lay out my table. I see my guest of the day before didn't have no lunch with him, but being informed that there was a dining car on the train, I was not to be caught in such a trap again, though he did look wistful at me. I set my mouth determined and half turned my back, which, being suggestive, he rose, slow and reluctant-like,

and walked towards the car where the eatables was, though he cast a longing look at mine on the way.

Well, I had just got my breakfast tucked away and myself set comfortable and picturesque-like, when the high lord sauntered back into the car. I kept my eyes real diligent out of the window till he got most up to me. Then I raised them real innocent-like to him, and says: "Back so soon?"

As I kind of moved along, he set down beside me. I couldn't help peeking over my shoulder to see if that other woman was looking. I see she was still laughing, showing her yellow teeth, but this time with another man.

Says he, in answer to the remark I had greeted him with, in real soft tone of voice: "Too soon?"

"No," says I, kind of resenting, from a sense of duty, such looks from any other man but Ephraim, "not if you've took proper care of your stomach."

The train kept a-whizzing, and nothing was said for a few minutes as we looked at the fields, now lying barren and cold through

Ohio. As we dashed through little hamlets we could see men who was beating one hand against their breast to keep warm—them that was driving—while they used the other to hold the reins with. And all this looked mighty familiar.

Finally, the man says: "I haven't had the pleasure of your name!"

And I says: "Nor I of your'n."

"My name," says he, "is Elder Morton."

"And mine," says I, "is Phoebe Ann Lysander. I'm proper glad that you are an elder. That was the ambition of my partner I just left, before he become one. Now I can feel real safe in your company!"

"You surely can," says he, "I'm used to taking care of ladies. In fact, I'm with them every day."

Then he added, with a melting look: "But it's not often I find myself in as good company as at present. Forget about your separated partner and I will tell you a great deal about the life that we live in Salt Lake City that'll make you happier than you ever were in your life before."

Now wasn't that clever of him? "I want

to know," says I, "everything that can make me happy, for happiness is a thing that most people seem on the dead run for, though I notice it escapes most of them. But do tell," I urged, "what gives such a funny name to the place where happiness has set up her dwelling? Is it possible that Lot's wife should have been buried there?"

"No," says he, smiling, "there are natural reasons why the place should be named as it is; though we are one of the lost tribes of Israel."

"Do tell!" says I, looking at him real close. Then an idea striking me, I says: "*Now* I understand why you've been denied the great and boundless blessing of drinking—it's because the water is salt!"

At that he laughed right out, and says: "You don't understand, my good woman; it's the sect to which I belong. I am a Mormon."

"Oh!" says I, "I never heard of them before; be they like the Quakers? Do they all wear long-tailed coats like you?"

"No," says he, "we don't aim to dress alike. There are fundamentals of our faith

that, if we lose sight of, are sure to bring damnation on our souls."

Believing that by fundamentals he meant some of that cash the people was always calling for, I slid my hand up to my waist to see if *my* funds was safe. There was the bunch, and I heaved a sigh of relief.

"And are the Mormons real poor?" says I, in a sympathizing tone, thinking how many of them must be weeping and wailing for losing sight of them funds!

"On the contrary," says he, "they are rich past all belief."

At that I kind of straightened up, and my respect for the long-tailed coat increased. That other woman didn't know the honor she was losing. I looked back again to see if she was noticing all that was going on.

Looking up to him, with my heart in my eyes, I says: "What you tell me of the Mormons is mighty interesting. I should like to become better acquainted with such worth which isn't often found here below."

By his look and his manner, this pleased him amazing. "Really," says he, "you're a very unusual woman; it will be a great treat

to teach as well as to initiate you into our life at Salt Lake City."

"Tell me first how they got their money;" says I. "My partner spent his life in the pursuit of that material and only within the past few years made out his end."

"I suppose," says he, kind of eager-like, "that you got your share of it?"

"I surely did," says I, "and have it safe and secure!"

Then he began to paint pictures of the place where the aforesaid happiness has squatted down contented to dwell. "You ask me how the Mormons got their money?" says he. "When Brigham Young sent us across the desert, from the East, to take up the land of what is now Salt Lake City, this leader took care that we should settle by as many streams of water as possible and gather stock about us."

"I see, I see," says I, excited, "you laid in a lot of stock which you watered, and then you got people to believe they was getting the genuine article for their money! Ephraim's told me all about it."

"Well," says he, not noticing the interrup-

tion, "this being so, we could raise anything we wanted by irrigation, and this soon made the land very fertile and valuable."

"But about going across that desert," says I, "that's interesting. Suppose you tell me about that part."

"Well," says he, moving a little closer, "a great band of Mormons set out together for their new home. The way had been paved for them by a few disciples, who could be trusted, who had been sent from the East to the West, to report on the new country. So, in caravans, with emigrant wagons, horses and mules, men, women and children moved along together over the desert. Many features about the journey were discouraging. The desert itself was white with the bones of men and horses that had perished for lack of water. And sentinels were in steady demand, for there was constant danger from Indians. The Mormons were compelled to rely on these scouts and sentinels. The first would go in advance and see that the way was clear; and the other, for they were trustworthy men, would keep watch all night."

"How exciting!" says I. "Your religion

would have done more for the United States than any other way you could show it up, if you could only have cleared the country of them Indians!"

"O, sister," says he, kind of mournful-like, "your views are too much of the earth; we have a spiritual mission to perform, for we are to establish Zion in this country. We are the chosen people."

"Who says so?" says I. "Them opinions have been set forth by the Jews for quite a spell. The Bible *does* mention the Jews, but don't say nothing about the Mormons!"

"Ah!" says he, "we have the Book of Mormon, disclosed to Joseph Smith in a vision, which is the counterpart of the Testament of the Western Continent, and that says we are. Do you believe," says he, getting excited, "that people in their right minds would pay twelve million dollars for a temple, and put on one of the towers a gold-plated bronze figure of the angel Moroni, who revealed the tablets of the Book of Mormon, if they didn't believe it?"

This was past all arguing, for money always counts, but I couldn't help saying:

"That's what the Jews believe, and they're dead sure they be going to come in winners on the ownership of the last great temple ever erected on this earth. Be your elders like priests? Do they marry?"—And I looked out on the passing country.

"Well, some!" says he, but whether he meant only a few, or whether they believed in it with their whole heart, I was hard at guessing, when he continued, "we believe that it is more than nature, it is an imperative command to take unto ourselves wives."

"Now that sounds reasonable," says I, adding, kind of timid-like, "be you married?" And again I looked out of the window.

"I am sealed," says he. Then noticing my looks at the country he added, "As fast as the sage brush is imbedded in the sand of this desert."

"Well,—you needn't be so sassy about it," says I. "I told you straight out about leaving my partner, and didn't tell you, when you asked questions, that I was sealed!"

With that he kind of groaned, and says: "We will resume that part of the conversation later," and went over to his own place,

though I see him looking round after that other woman.

Being still pretty spry on my feet, I glided over to the seat occupied by the bone of contention and set down beside her.

"Nice day!" says I.

"Yes," says she, kind of smiling, "when they set out to, the Mormons generally contrive to make a woman feel so."

Says I, kind of mystified as to her meaning, "I suppose you know a great deal about them Mormons!"

"Yes," says she, "and so will you before tomorrow this time."

With that I looked at her real interested, and seeing the difference in my expression she took another tack as well. Lowering her voice she says:

"Has he asked you to marry him yet?"

Now such a question, even when all parties is expecting such an issue, and nothing standing in the way, is kind of presumptuous; but to ask *me*, the wife of my dear partner, and him an elder in the Presbyterian church, was nothing less than scandalous.

Says I, "Madam, you have mistaken your

party. I have been a wife for twenty-five years."

"Well," says she, real animated, "that's all the better. Let's agree to have a little fun. I am the wife of a doctor and have two children to home. This is the third time I've crossed the Continent alone, on a visit to my mother, and every time I have been asked to marry a Mormon on the way over. You know, by this time, I suppose," says she, "that they get every woman they take a fancy to to make wife Number One, Two, Three, Four or Five, or whatever it may be. They indulge in what we call bigamy. They believe in what they call plural marriages."

"Goodness mercy sakes alive!" says I, near collapsing in my excitement. "Why they can be put in prison for such goings on!"

"Yes," says she, "if the proper authorities find it out, but they have such power they practically control the situation. Didn't he tell you that he was married?"

"No," says I, "he said he was sealed."

With that she give the merriest laugh you ever heard, and says: "That was the same as admitting that he had any number of wives!"

How funny people do talk in the world! It sometimes seems as if our little Wayneville was a peaceful land-locked harbor that was hid from all the noise, wickedness, and confusion of this great, big, blustering world.

We both sat silent for a few minutes, watching the sage-and-brush sand heaps, like little hills, fly past us. She was concocting her scheme, I suppose, and I was thinking with disgust of that bunch of conceit in front of me, feeling that every woman he edged up to would open both arms to receive him.

In a minute I see her eyes brighten, and she says real low, leaning over towards me: "I'll tell you what to do. Don't let him know you're married."

"But I have," says I.

"Well," says she, "then let him think you've left your husband in the East, which is really true, you know," she added.

Then it struck me for the first time that that was just what he thought.

"All right," says I, "I can manage that!" seeing as it was already managed.

"The train will reach Salt Lake City some

time in the night, and as he won't want to go off without us, you will see what a nice little plan he will want to work. He will propose to me in the dining car, probably, and when he comes back will not seem to notice me at all. Then this afternoon he will put the question to you and you must consent that it is the only life to lead and that you are converted to his faith. During supper he will continue the courtship with me, believing that you know nothing about it—quietly eating your lunch in this car—and commence it with you again after the lamps are lit. He will want me to get off, as a stranger to you, at Salt Lake City, and plan to rouse you and take your baggage for you. Meantime," and here her voice sank lower, "I will get into your berth with you, and when he comes for you he will find us both prepared to give him a welcome!"

This looked interesting and full of harmless fun, seeing as he already had quite a number of wives' bosoms to lay his head upon and deliver his grief unto.

"I think," says she, "you have sat here long enough. He will think we are too well

acquainted, for he reckons on getting us both off the train and away from help, on his own territory, to reconcile us to new conditions and his falsity."

With that I got up and flounced over to my own seat, like I was plumb disgusted with the woman he appeared to have took a shine to. By this time the waiter from the dining car come in and handed around calendars of what they had to eat and called out that dinner was ready. With that the old sinner across the car got up kind of slow and looked down at me.

"Well," thinks I, "if we carry out the fun I must act like I didn't have no partner and was on the dead set for one." So I kind of frowned and looked up with a lot of expression in my eyes.

Says he, smiling: "We will resume our conversation after dinner."

"All right," says I, dropping my eyes, "but mind you don't tell me you're sealed again!"

The dinner must have been a full one, they was so long; though I suspicioned that something else was keeping them but the dinner.

So I leaned back, kind of drowsy, against the red plush of my seat. Pretty soon I fell asleep, and didn't know nothing till about three o'clock in the afternoon. Opening my eyes, I looked around for my long-coated sinner. He had risen from the side of the other woman the minute he see me stir, and had took his own seat, thinking I hadn't seen where he come from. I see by the smile on his face that she was keeping her part of the agreement, and to carry out the fun, I must keep mine. He give me a chance to sit up and kind of pull myself together for business when he once more set down beside me. I was so afraid of laughing I dare not look over my shoulder to see if the other woman was looking.

"Dreams pleasant?" says he.

"Well," says I, "that depends. I was dreaming that a tiger had six wives, or tigresses, and meeting a real pretty animal that he hadn't got in his lair yet he was trying to bait her. Just as he put one paw on her back she sprang at him and give him a nab in the neck."

"Well," says he, looking at me real sharp,

"it don't strike me as the most pleasant of dreams. He should have made her see the spiritual union, instead of the physical. In our faith, marriages are supposed to be spiritual. By spiritual, we mean that a woman can be sealed, or given in marriage, to a man that is dead, and be considered his property."

"O dear," says I, "how very unsatisfying!"

"Yes, under certain conditions," says he, "I think it might be myself. But every woman *must* have a husband in the resurrection to step forward and raise the veil from her face before she can be recognized as a soul and judged."

"O dear! O dear!" says I, pulling out my handkerchief and beginning to cry; "what shall I do, what shall I do? I do want to rise, but where's my man?" And with that I was convulsed with grief.

"Well," says he, slipping an arm over the back of the seat, "don't you cry so, Phoebe Ann, I will raise the veil."

"Oh," says I, dropping my eyes, bashful, and playing with the corner of my handkerchief, "I didn't mean you was to do it! But

just think where I would have spent Eternity if you hadn't been on this train and saved my soul!"

Time was going on apace. As it was getting time for supper he says:

"The train reaches Salt Lake City before morning. Providence has put us near each other on the train, and as I see you have a number of parcels, I will come to your berth for you just before it is time to alight. Will you be ready?"

"Sure," says I, "and waiting and longing for the hour to arrive!"—Which was true, as I wanted to see him get what was due him.

After supper I was so full of laughter that I made preparation for going to bed early. I give excuse to my suitor that it was necessary in order to be ready early in the morning for him. After I laid down, I peeked out of the side of the curtain and there I see the elder and the doctor's wife sitting up close together.

After a while I got to sleep and was dreaming hard, when I felt a hand touch my shoulder. I sprung up quick, I was so feared it might be the elder, but hearing the wonder-

ful snoring across the way I was comforted.

"Sh—!" said the doctor's wife, putting something down beside me, "don't make any noise! I have brought these things for our use! It won't be long before he comes now, and we must be ready for him!" All this she said in a whisper, putting her head up close to mine. "I will get in the upper berth," she went on, "and when I ask you for the things, just hand them up. He won't look for me, for he has told me to follow him. He thinks that I am going to dress and stay in my berth till I see him get off."

I laid down real still, and it didn't seem such a long time before I heard a stir across the way. Then it come nearer. By and by I heard a hand at the curtain.

"Don't open it yet, elder," says I, hoarse-like; "I'm near ready, just have a hook or two to fasten yet."

"All right," says he, "don't be long!"

Being afraid to have the other woman speak, even in a whisper, I handed up the things she had brought with her.

"Now all right," says she, so low I could hardly hear her myself.

With that open popped the curtain, and tipping that pitcher she held high in one hand, she poured a flood of ice water over the waiting suitor below! Not to be outdone, I grabbed the scissors I always carry with me, and catching hold of his coat I clipped one of the tails off up to the waist!

"Ugh!—Ugh!" he yelled, as he ducked under the water that shrivelled his collar up into nothing and made his hair look like the fur of a drowned rat.

"Quite so!" says I. "I'd like to keep this coat-tail as a souvenir of our spiritual union!"

"While I," says the doctor's wife, "would like to have you tell your wives they needn't call for any water for your bath to-night. Just tell them you've been given one free of charge!"

Seeing that he was fleeing with his baggage as fast as he could, I took up my shoe and give it a fling after him, hitting him square between the shoulders.

"*Shoo!*" says I, "skedaddle as if the devil was after you,"—and with that he disappeared from view.

By this time most of the car was looking

out of their curtains, while one or two of the men had jumped to the floor hearing the splash of water and thinking the car might be on fire. When the fun struck them, they just laughed and laughed and clapped their hands.

The next morning the doctor's wife and I shook hands and continued constant companions to the end of the journey.

Tell Ephraim I grow more lonesome for him every day. I'd rather you wouldn't tell him about this courting; he might think it foolish!

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER II.

Los Angeles, California,
December 10th, 19—.

My dear Susanna:

I suppose you'll want to know all about my arrival and them relations I set out to spend the year with.

When the day arrived I was to get to Los Angeles, I put on my smart black silk frock that I had done over and cleaned in coffee just before I started. I took considerable pains to make myself look like a very respectable guest.

Having got all prim, and my parcels all did up in proper shape, I set back expecting. I had eaten my lunch, which, by the way, was pretty slim by this time. In fact it amounted to only a slice of dry bread and a little jam. But I calculated that my nephew and his wife would get me up a right good supper; there was no call for me to part with any of my money yet.

About four o'clock we rolled into Los

Catching hold of his coat, I clipped one of the tails off up to the waist.

Angeles. I had expected to see a nice, decent-looking little village, therefore I was considerablely surprised to see a great big place, which looked from the car window to be another New York.

I was just taking up my last bundle when a man touched me on the arm. I turned round to see a big, burly fellow with a light-colored suit and breeches stuck inside of leggins.

"I will take your bundles," says he, "we are waiting for you."

"No, you don't!" says I. "I know you and your gang of green-goods men, and Phoebe Ann's mind is strong enough to guide her footsteps yet. So you just trot right back to where you come from and tell them you can't come it over one woman on this train, if she is alone and defenceless!"

During all this burst of righteous indignation, he had stood still holding that plug hat in his hand.

"My master told me to get you off the train," says he.

"Well," says I, "now you hearken to me. You just track back and tell him Phoebe

Ann ain't coming yet; and present my compliments."

"Yes'm," says he, and walks off.

Well, didn't I always know that if you resist the devil he'll flee from you?

I cast my eyes down to see my blue ribbon that I was to wear so Lucy Jane would know me, was surely in place, then I prepared to follow the rest. I declare I felt most as bewildered as I did when I got off the train in New York. I stood still a second, waiting for Lucy Jane or Hezekiah, but I see no one answering to the description they had give of themselves.

In a minute I see some one taking off their hat beside me, and I turned around real joyful to think they had come. But what do you think?—Another one of them critters, dressed just like the other, had arrived! Says I: "I've already had a conversation with your brother, and he's gone back to your father to tell him he's made a mistake in his selection this time! So just you slip along and join him."

"Madam," says he, as grave as an owl, "the footman has persuaded me to come since you wouldn't let him take your parcels.

Master and missus is anxious to see you!"

Just then, for I had reached the gate myself by this time, a woman with feathers flying over one shoulder and a beautiful tight-fitting dress on, with gloves to match, and little bits of feet in glossy black shoes steps forward with both hands extended.

"My Aunt Phoebe!" she says with a welcoming smile.

"And is this my niece, Lucy Jane?" says I. "I must just set down these bundles till I get my breath."

"Why, Aunt Phoebe," says she, "I don't wonder you're tired with such a load of things. Here John, take these parcels right out to the carriage and we'll be out directly."

Looking round I see that same man approaching. He come forward, and tipping his hat, says in the selfsame solemn tone, "Yes'm." He took them away, this time without any objections on my part, and Lucy Jane and I began to thread our way through the crowd to get to their wagon.

"And where's Hezekiah," says I, "couldn't he take time to run around from his shop to see me?"

I thought she kind of stiffened up a little at this, but she says in a real quiet tone: "Hezekiah is very sorry, Aunt Phoebe, but some business connected with the department store, of which he is master, has called him out of town until tomorrow. He told me to tell you that he would return as soon as possible."

Having arrived at the carriage, which I scanned carefully after I see them bundles was safe, we stepped in. Now I'll be bound, Susanna, you never see anything like that carriage! It had a little seat, without any back to it, stuck up high on top of the back axles. The part we got in swung real low and was very wide. It had two seats, one facing the other, real sociable-like. Up in front was another seat for the one that was driving, but that didn't have no back. I says to myself: "I hope they won't never perch me up there for I do like a nice comfortable back."

The man that I first see on the train was holding the horses, which had their heads held way up high in the air like they was smelling fire and wanted to run. The other brother had climbed up on the front seat

beside the driver. Turning to Lucy Jane I says:

"How sot those brothers be on each other; yet what a difference there is in them. One is real thin like the mother, I suppose, and the other fat like the father. And then they are so careful to dress alike! I've always heard twins liked to stay together!"

At this Lucy Jane looked like she would surely laugh, but she didn't. She says to me real low: "They're not brothers, Aunt Phoebe. They never saw each other in their lives till a month ago. That's the color of our livery."

Thinks I to myself: "Wonder if Hezekiah dresses like that!" But there was more revelations coming!

We drove away from the station through a part of the town that didn't look no great shucks to me, though I didn't say so. I see now the wisdom of having two men on hand. If one should die of fright in the crowd of wagons and cars, the other could snatch the lines and keep right on driving!

Pretty soon we left the cars and wagons and bid good-bye to the big buildings and stores. Then we begun to roll up wide

avenues and to see beautiful homes. But the houses struck me as very peculiar. Most of them was one story and very long; sort of a hotel on one floor. Over the front door was a little balcony with a garden box on its rail and pink ivy geraniums falling over, down toward the street, about six or eight feet. This kind of houses, Lucy Jane said, was called "Bungalows;" and the nicest houses to live in you ever saw. In front of nearly every house was one, and sometimes three or four, great big palms.

Pretty soon we drove up to a great big house that was light-colored like cream. The driveway wasn't a mite like our muddy one to home! This had nice pebbles all over it, and was bordered with bright-red geraniums. I had in my mind's eye how the leaves was dropping when I left home, and the snow was beginning to flurry, while we listened to the sighing of the wind as it scooted down the side of the chimney, while here was a great, big, green lawn just like velvet! In the middle of this was a fountain in which a naked girl, or the figure of one, was holding up a parasol! Great palms, about twenty feet

high, waved to the breeze, and some trees, that I afterwards learned was crepe myrtle, was full of pink flowers, just like a great big bouquet. I tell you, Susanna, it was just like stepping into fairyland.

Well, by this time, we had come to the house itself which I had seen, indistinct, between the trees, and it was beautiful. It had a wide porch running all round it and looked like a mansion. But Lucy Jane didn't take me to the front door as I should have done, at least not yet. The man with the cold legs drove right along without saying a word. Right beside the house we come to a place that was the prettiest I ever see!

Here two poles had been set up, about twenty feet apart, and a pole put on top from one to the other. This was covered with green vines and big bunches of purplish red flowers which Lucy Jane calls "boganvilea." It was just like riding into a summer house, only there was an opening at the other end. Here the horses stopped, and the man that wasn't driving jumped off and helped us on the step and from there we easily stepped onto the porch. This, Lucy Jane told me

later, is called a "porte-cochere." Such funny names makes you think you are surely in a foreign land.

As we reached the front door it opened with never a sound. Now this kind of pleased me, for you know how our front door to home does creak and groan when we admit people! Says I to myself: "If there's a secret spring anybody can touch that can make a door work like that, then I'll surely carry one home with me!" So, as we passed in, I peeked behind the door to see how it worked.

There, straight and still, stood another man in light-colored clothes. This I knowed was Hezekiah! How nice of him to want to surprise his wife, getting home sooner than she expected; he must be in kind of a playful frame of mind! I felt sure his wife hadn't seen him. So I says: "Why, Hezekiah, I'm so glad to see you! Here, Lucy Jane, don't you know your husband when you see him!" And I turned, laughing, to her.

But Lucy Jane turned toward me stiff and cold, and says: "Aunt Phoebe, the trip has been too much for your nerves! That is my butler. I beg of you to let me see you to your

room, and then lie down and rest!" As for the butler, he never moved, he never said a word or worked a muscle of his face.

"Well," says I, "seeing as I be mistook, I'll just walk along with you, as you say." I was kind of took down, Susanna, but then it never takes me long to recover my spirits.

A woman, with a white apron and cap was in the dining room, which I see as we passed, going around real soft. I begun to suspicion right away that we had sickness in the house; but I thought I wouldn't speak of it yet to Lucy Jane. When I see another one come out of the room which Lucy Jane said was hers, I begun to be frightened. Yet she hadn't said a word about there being such serious trouble in her home.

Maybe you wonder what we did say. Well, seeing as I was so interested in looking at houses and things along, Lucy Jane only explained the different things to me as we drove on. Otherwise she left me to enjoy myself, which was proper nice of her I thought. Every little unselfish act in life carries its own reward with it, I've found, and so I just made up my mind that all these fine

things might be part of the reward of Lucy Jane.

We went up broad, easy stairs till we come to a big square hall furnished just like a room. Now in Wayneville we think that people who have money ought to have carpets on their floors! But here it seemed just opposite; for there was never a carpet on any floor I'd seen yet; they was just bare, but all shined up with rugs laid down in all sorts of shapes, just as if some of them had been kicked around and some laid down when the people was dizzy. Leading off this hall was a beautiful large room, which Lucy Jane now led me to, and beyond was another smaller room.

"These are your rooms, Aunt Phoebe," says she, "and I hope you'll be very comfortable in them."

"Thank you, Lucy Jane," says I, looking around the beautifully furnished room, "but I couldn't think of taking your sitting room away from you. I'll just stay in my bedroom, except when I'm with the family."

"Why, Aunt Phoebe," says she, "this is not our sitting room. Our living room is down stairs, where we spend most of our time,

and of course where we expect you to join us. I'll just step into my room for awhile, and leave you to rest. When dinner is ready I'll come for you."

"All right," says I, for my stomach was getting terrible faint. But when sickness is in the house, everything must give way to it; and I couldn't think of asking Lucy Jane for any refreshment under such circumstances.

Looking out I see a grove of beautiful orange trees on the other side of the house. Then I brought my eyes back again into the room itself. The walls was tinted a beautiful shade of blue; and the furniture in the room was white and gold. Water-color paintings hung on the walls and everything was beautiful, even to the polished maple desk, all set out with pens and papers by the window.

When I caught sight of that a tide of homesickness crossed me of which I was ashamed. Somehow, if things had been less grand and stately, and people had walked about, laughing and singing with the freedom of a home, I should have been more contented. Everything I see delighted my eyes, but my heart wasn't enlisted. If great wealth made men

and women like that, afraid to speak or act civil and interested in a body, then I was glad Ephraim had stuck to his crops and not set up a notion store! Still, Lucy Jane seemed a clever woman and I made no doubt I'd get on with her very well. I should like to see Hezekiah though, I thought, and see if he wore them regimentals which she seemed to demand from every one around her. The nurses must be tending either the boy or the girl, both of which I knew she had, and I wondered what was the matter with them.

I ventured into the other room, where I was to sleep, and found everything just as beautiful there. I laid down on the bed for awhile and fell asleep. I was wakened by Lucy Jane saying:

"It's dinner time, Aunt Phoebe!"

I was soon ready, for it didn't take long to straighten my hair. I see she was dressed in white and had some beautiful pearls around her neck and a rose in her hair. She looked like she was going to have some company for dinner, but she said I was the only company in the house, and so I was comforted.

Going down the stairs she threw open the

dining room door, and it was the most beautiful sight you ever see! A great big sideboard, filled with silver and cut glass, stood opposite, and there was cut flowers in crystal vases and jardinieres of ferns. The table had a fountain made in the middle of it, in the basin of which was roses floating, while the spray sent up from it was a perfume.

There was nothing on the table yet, but some knives and forks and spoons; some glasses and napkins. "Well," says I to myself, "the cook's a-hustling, no doubt, to make it by the time we get down here, but I suppose the fire or something went back on her."

But Lucy Jane didn't appear to notice that they'd forgotten to put the victuals on, and showed me where I was to sit. I was just going to set when I felt my chair held firm. Then one of them men, I suppose the one that was at the door, begun to push me up to the table. As this kind of made the chair hit me in the calves of my legs, I tumbled down into a sitting position, but he continued to push me up.

"Now that was real nice of you," I says, "only give me warning next time! Here's

a seat beside me. Sit right down and we'll have a nice little chat together."

Susanna, you hear me! If that man had been as deaf as a stone he couldn't have turned away more quietly! He never raised his eyes.

"What a pity," says I, addressing Lucy Jane, "that your friend be deaf and dumb!"

I don't know what answer she would have made me, for just at that minute a young girl with the most interesting face I ever see, dressed in white like her mother, appeared in the door; she was a vision of loveliness. She smiled brightly to her mother and then looked at me.

"Angelina," says Lucy Jane, "this is your Aunt Phoebe."

She give me one of the pretty looks I soon learned to love, as she said: "I am so glad you have come, Aunt Phoebe. I have been out or I would have been to see you before."

Then her little brother Dominie followed, a boy of about twelve. But I shall tell you all about both of the children later.

We went on with our dinner and nothing happened of much consequence. When the nurse come back to me after giving me a little

cup of soup which she took away from me as soon as I finished, I said real low, for Angelina and her mother was talking:

"I'm sorry you have to do this in addition to your sick-room duties! If I was only more familiar with the house, I'd jump right up and help. Now just you bring in everything you got out there for me and set it in a little pile around my plate and I'll help myself!"

Wouldn't you have said that, Susanna? Well, she didn't bring it in as I told her, but the next time she come to the table I could see there had been tears in her eyes and the muscles around her mouth was working. As she turned away, I see her laugh to herself. I suppose she was so worried she had hysterics!

I must quit for this time for it's getting late. Tell Ephraim to mind the black cow don't buck.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER III.

Los Angeles, California,
December 12th, 19—.

My dear Susanna:

At last I have got a letter from the land of my birth. I pored over it for an hour before I could lay it down. When I come to that description of the Thanksgiving dinner, I just burst out crying.

We had Thanksgiving too, but such a different one! Of course we had turkey, as well as lots of French dishes, but I couldn't make it seem like the day. You say you had a right smart snow storm in the morning which cleared off cold, still, and icy by night. Then you all gathered around the log fire and cracked nuts I suppose, while you told stories, washed down by sweet cider. Well, that was like home!

Our dinner was served to us in little mites, one thing at a time. I suppose it's a great saving to give everybody just a little scoop of a thing, but somehow it don't seem like

meals. The windows was open, and the ices we had was real refreshing, it was so warm.

Lucy Jane and Angelina both had on thin dresses and then they was complaining of the heat. The grass was green as midsummer, and the roses just pushing each other, trying to get a chance to show themselves, the bushes was crammed so full.

We always go to church on Thanksgiving morning back home, but here we spent the morning in selecting what to wear in the evening, for I must tell you that we had been invited to a big ball for Thanksgiving evening.

Of course I won't deny that it seemed funny to me that grown people should care anything about playing that game, but I suppose the warm weather makes them feel kind of playful-like, I thought. So as I didn't want to seem odd, though I didn't know a thing about the game, I agreed to go. Before consenting though, I made sure that Hezekiah was to be one of the party.

When I asked him he says, laughing, "Why Aunt Phoebe, Lucy Jane's at the head of the game in this town, and we all flock where she leads!"

"My, my," says I to myself, "who would have thought it of such a quiet, dignified looking woman! I should never have give her credit for being set on pitching ball."

Hezékiah, I must tell you, come home the next day after I arrived just as he promised his wife. He was so hearty in his greetings that I liked him right away. I see he was full of jokes and teasings to Angelina, specially, who I could see was his favorite, and what wonder? But when he was thinking and not noticing anything around him, I could see there was lines about his mouth and a stern, thoughtful expression in his eyes. His hair, too, was turning gray in places.

I seen Angelina was his favorite. Well, I must tell you something about that girl. I suppose you have seen a picture of Saint Cecilia sitting at a piano where little angels threw down roses on the keys? Well, that face is just like Angelina's. And when she sits down to the piano in the living room in the evening, just in the after-glow, which is the time of our twilight to home, I most start at the resemblance, and have already caught myself looking up to the ceiling to see

if them angels have arrived with the proper bouquet. She is so different from other girls you see, there's no making any comparison between them. She just talks to that piano, and I know it answers her back by the way she caresses them keys. And if you speak to her at such a time she never answers in a melancholy or sad tone of voice, but just whirls round on her stool as quick and smiles as bright, doing anything for you that you want. The little world about her seems to be very important to her, but when she see they don't need her particularly, she just floats off to that other world she takes such delight in, like a caged bird flies home when the windows is open and it's set at liberty.

I had studied Angelina from the first minute I see that interesting face and I was still deep in the lesson of learning her.

She appeared to me to be the occupant of two worlds, and I was all the time trying to get a peek into the one that couldn't be plainly seen.

I see Angelina wasn't much set on the game her mother seemed so interested in and kind of demurred at first about going. She put it

so nice, I shouldn't have thought Lucy Jane would have had the heart to oppose her.

"Mama," says she, "I'd rather stay to home. You know I never take any pleasure when I go out in company who care only for light things, and I'm sure to feel sad for two or three days afterward. An hour in contact with some great mind would mean so much more to me than a whole evening with such people as we will meet there. Please don't urge me, mama; the game isn't worth the candle!"

She looked at her mother with such earnestness that I didn't see how she could have the heart to urge her. But she did.

"O nonsense, Angelina," says she, "you are the strangest girl! Why don't you take up some other fad but that of literature? What will all your knowledge profit you in making a match suitable for a daughter of your father? If you longed a little more for dress and jewels and not so much for books, you'd do a heap better. You know Clarence Grey will be there tonight."

I see Angelina grow pale, but she said nothing.

Then turning to me Lucy Jane says: "Aunt Phoebe, what would you do with a girl that when her birthday come round and we asked what she wanted, whether a ring, an ostrich plume, or what, she asked for some books?"

"Well," says I right smart, "I'd give her the books. What she tucks in her head can't be worn out on her back or lost!"

"But she didn't get them," said Lucy Jane triumphantly, "she got an ostrich plume!"

I looked at Angelina and I see her eyes was fixed real grateful on me. Then she says quietly:

"Very well, mama, I will go if it will give you any pleasure."

I kept wondering when I was looking over my things seeing what to wear, why Angelina turned white when that man's name was mentioned. Also what was the reason she wasn't like either her father or mother, and just wanted to study all the time.

Among the things I had brought was an old coat, worn by Ephraim, that I had thought to slip on if I was chilly to save my best cashmere shawl. "Now," thinks I, "this will come in just right." So laying that to

one side, I hunted up an old pair of gloves. These would be proper good when the ball come spinning my way to save my hands.

Just then I looked up and I see Lucy Jane and Angelina coming to my room. Lifting the mattress of my bed I give my regimentals a shove underneath, before they caught sight of them. "For," says I, inwardly, "how nice it'll be to surprise them when we get there! They'll think I've been so thoughtful to bring everything I needed. I can put my long dominick over the whole suit, and under the coat of Ephraim's, I'll wear my lace waist so that if they have refreshments at the close, I can show them how stylish I be to be double prepared!"

At this minute I heard the front-door bell, and I thought Angelina's color came up a little. She hadn't got any more than set down when the butler tiptoed up the stairs with a silver tray in his hand and offered it to Angelina. She took the card and I see her color was still arising.

"Who is it?" says Lucy Jane, though I think she suspicioned. "How tiresome to be interrupted on Thanksgiving afternoon."

"It's Mr. Earlham," says Angelina, "I suppose you have no objections to my seeing him?" and she looked wistfully at her mother.

"No, you may go down," says Lucy Jane, impatient-like, "but I will be there directly. I don't see why he can't find some other house to haunt except this. He only encourages you in your nonsense!"

Angelina turned to go with a light in her face I hadn't seen before, and I thought quick: "That's the reason she turned pale at the mention of that other man's name!"

"You'll see enough of this Mr. Earlham," says Lucy Jane to me, "I wish he was at the North Pole! I declare he's just hypnotized that girl, and all she cares for is her books and this one caller. And her father is so set on having her marry such an establishment as Mr. Grey could give her!"

Being left to myself again I set quite a spell by the window thinking. Hezekiah had had to go out on business even if it was Thanksgiving, while to home Ephraim never thought of such a thing as leaving me all day except to see the chores was done. Somehow I couldn't

help being glad that we lived so near to each other, and had only one girl in the kitchen to do the hardest work.

I heard no more from downstairs, and as the after-glow had set in, and it would soon be time to think of the evening's fun, I fished them goods out from under the mattress. Picking out the shortest skirt I had, so as not to get tripped up when I took a sprint after that ball, I shut that and the coat up in the closet together where I could get them handy. I wasn't going to dress until after the evening meal, and then behind locked doors, for fear they would catch me in my pleasant little surprise. I always did dress with my door locked after the experience of the first day in the house of my relations, which I must tell you about.

I had risen the morning after my arrival and I was about to pick up my spitz curls and pin them in place when there come a rap at the door. Going to it I see one of the nurses. Believing that whoever was sick was worse, I says anxious to be of help:

"And is your patient real bad? I'll throw on my wrapper and come right off."

The nurse looked at me real hard, and says: "Missus said I was to help you dress."

"O, is it as bad as that?" says I, trying to find my wrapper, "but I think I can manage better alone."

With that she says: "Very well, ma'am, if there isn't anything I can do for you, I'll go back."

"Do!" says I, "and hurry as fast as you can! No telling your patient may have fell out of bed by this time!"

Hurrying my wrapper on over my night gown, I struck out for Lucy Jane's room. Lucy Jane herself come to the door. "Why, Aunt Phoebe," she says, "what's the matter? You look as though you had seen a ghost!"

"Lucy Jane," says I, "how can you be so cool! Where is the sick room where the nurse you just sent to me is?"

"My nurse? Why I don't understand!" and then she must have understood, for all of a sudden she began laughing. Then she says:

"Aunt Phoebe, I sent a maid to help you dress and do little things for you. Both Angelina and myself have one, and I don't know how we could get on without them.

They keep our wardrobe in repair, comb our hair, and do all sorts of useful things."

"My, my," says I, "you be quite helpless! But since I've dressed myself for upwards of forty year and combed my hair several thousand times during that period, I reckon I can do it a few more times. So thanking you for your thoughtfulness, I think I'll just keep on." After this Lucy Jane never offered me any more help along this line.

Well, we all retired to our rooms to dress for that game of ball. It took Lucy Jane and Angelina an unaccountable time, and I heard the maids running around and a great to-do being carried on.

I heard Hezekiah go downstairs first, so I thought I would go and have a little talk with him while we was waiting for the rest. So I put my dominick over my suit and went down after him.

I found him in the library, which is furnished in dark-colored wood which they call mission furniture—I suppose that's the kind they furnish Sunday School missions with out here. Hearing a step behind him he turned round and says:

"O, Aunt Phoebe! I don't get much time to talk, do I? Here, sit down in this chair and we'll try to get a little talk in before the rest arrive in their gay trappings!" Then he smiled one of them pleasant, sociable smiles I like so well.

"Hezekiah," says I, coming to the point at once, "do you think it pays to wear your life away the way you are doing? You are only a young man yet, not much past fifty; you are getting wrinkles and gray hair and"—

"Here! here! Aunt Phoebe," says he, laughing, "no comments on my personal beauty. To be in style you should tell me I'm a handsome, solid-looking man!"

"Well," says I, "I know that you ain't getting the best out of life there is in it. We don't have a houseful of men and women to pay and feed, and yet we contrive to always get enough to eat, and Ephraim *does* have time to spend by his own fire-side!"

"But, Aunt Phoebe," says he, looking very earnest in my eyes, "you don't have all this!" And he gestured towards the books, divans, statuary and other furnishings of the room.

"No," says I, "and right thankful I be! The less I have the less there is to dust and keep in order; and all, barring the books, is more for show than for real comfort. Of course, I don't say they ain't pretty, but they're not worth sacrificing a human being for!"

Just then we heard a swish of dresses, and Lucy Jane appeared in the doorway radiantly bright. Angelina was beside her, but it didn't seem to me she looked much interested. They both had on long cloaks made of light silk so I couldn't see what they had on underneath.

We rolled along behind them dancing horses and then pulled up in front of a very beautiful house. As we stopped, a man dressed in regimentals like Lucy's coachman come and helped us out. We went into a great long hall where people was laughing and talking, and where every one seemed specially pleased to see Lucy Jane.

I suppose they was glad she wasn't going to fail them tonight, as Hezekiah had said she was the leader. I wondered if he was the umpire!

Lucy Jane got her wrappings off first, and Angelina was soon ready too. I kind of held back, wanting more space by the glass to myself to be sure my coat collar wasn't turned up! I begun to suspicion, too, that they didn't dress in this part of the country like they did East for the game. Lucy Jane was a glitter of spangles and black lace, and had numerous diamonds, while Angelina wore a rose-colored chiffon and she had on pearls.

Howsomever, when Lucy Jane had left the room with a lot of other women, and only Angelina was with me, I took a bold step forward and threw off my dominick.

"Let's see," says I, real careless, "I'm all ready I believe." Then I turned and looked over my shoulder at myself real critical in the glass. "Coat, so as to have no loose sleeves in the way when I pitch that ball, and gloves, though they be old, yet will save my hands when it comes whizzing my way! I suppose Phoebe Ann will be called to the bat sometime this evening!"

Just then steps was heard coming along the hall, and quick as a wink Angelina

pulled me behind some curtains. We waited until they died away, and then Angelina says:

"Aunt Phoebe, whatever shall we do? This is the dressiest affair of the whole season, and mama ought to have told you. This isn't a game of ball at all, but a place where people spend the evening in dancing!"

"Good Lord!" says I, "and Ephraim an elder in the Presbyterian church and so set against dancing! I shall go right home even if I have to walk it!" I says aghast at what was before me.

"Now be a dear, good aunt," says Angelina, "and listen to reason. It would make no end of talk if you should go home, and you needn't dance yourself. But let me think!" says she, puckering up her eyebrows—"how shall we get you dressed for the occasion? I have it now," says she, brightening up, "you stay right here till I go for mama, and between us we can spare enough for you."

It didn't look to me as if they had enough for themselves, but before I could say anything she whisked off, and in a minute or two was back. Watching their chance,

they got in to me. Then Angelina, slipping off an underskirt with flounces and flounces of some sort of soft stuff, pulled it up under my short black skirt. The pink flounces all showed below, just as if they had been made there special! Spying my lace waist under the coat, they was as tickled as though they'd had a present given them.

Then Lucy Jane took off one of the necklaces, with rubies and diamonds on the chain, and slipped it round my neck, and put three of her biggest jewelled rings on both my hands, saying that would make up for my lack of gloves. To give the final touch, Angelina went over to a vase and took out a pink rose which she tucked in my hair. Having thus fitted me up, they opened the curtains and I stepped forth as pretty a picture as you ever seen!

Then we went into a great big room filled with people. At the other end was some palms all banked together, and behind them I see some men with instruments of music. They looked just like the circus band that came to Wayneville, only there was more of them.

I knew the floor looked real bright and shiny, but I never mistrusted but what I could walk on it. But I had only took a few steps in my journey across it, when I begun to slip. The pink flounces went a-dancing this way and that, and finally got tangled round my feet, so that just as I reached the nearest pot of palms, and had got my hand on it, down we all went together! There was exclamations from all sides, but they couldn't hide that some of 'em was laughing, though they tried to.

As Hezekiah helped me to my feet, I heard one of them men behind the palms say to another: "Why didn't you give the old girl a tune, just to help her along?"

After this I had considerable attention, which I see pleased Hezekiah mightily, but which Lucy Jane seemed real upset about. How foolish for her to get jealous of me!

People got scattered about pretty soon again, and begun their buzz of talking; forgetful already that one woman in that company had heart for those that was downtrodden!

I begun looking around for Angelina, and wondering if she would feel much hurt that

I had got her pink ruffles kind of mussed up! I see her the middle of a group of young men and women, laughing and talking as bright as though she was just where she would most rather be. Well, that was like her, being unselfish to please her ma.

I began to wonder which was Mr. Grey, and thought I had picked him out,—which I afterward found was right—when I see a tall, slim man, dressed like a fashion-plate, with a glass stuck in one eye. I looked at him real sharp, and I couldn't for the life of me like that sneering expression around his mouth. But he seemed to like Angelina, though I see she hardly ever looked at him, and kept looking over the company as though she was searching for some one else.

Pretty soon the band struck up a real lively tune, and the men and women begun to pair off, for a country dance. Not knowing how to step it out, I stood to one side and watched. They got in a kind of circle and took hands and then, jumping round, now this way and now that, they just bowed and touched hands.

"That's not like the country!" thinks I,

"I guess these people have never been there, or they'd shake hands different than that! We just grab each other's hands and shake till we get through."

After a time Hezekiah sent a maid up to me saying that he was going home, to come back after Lucy Jane later. He said that Angelina was going to accompany him and if I wanted to go, too, to come down stairs. Of course I did, and I made light tracks to where they was waiting for me. I see that Hezekiah's face was kind of red and he smiled when he see me; and that Angelina looked real pleased.

As we was going toward home, Angelina says: "You're a dear good aunty, but you don't understand our ways!"

And Hezekiah says: "I've been thinking, Aunt Phoebe, that I'd like to take you to a place I'm going to tomorrow. As you have real good sense, I know you'd like to have an astrologer tell you what you're cut out for. They help me mightily in my business."

"Well, Hezekiah," says I, "I'd be pleased to go with you, but as to the person you say will tell me what I'm cut out for, I don't

think I need his help. For the Lord cut me out for a good woman, and for Ephraim's wife. Howsomever, I will hear what other people's opinions be, if you like."

Tell Ephraim I'm as happy as I can be away from him; but people are very different in different parts of the world, as I am finding out.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER IV.

Los Angeles, California,
Dec. 18th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

I must tell you of a conversation I had with Angelina, which give me great food for thought for several days.

Hezekiah and Lucy Jane had gone out to a concert, and Angelina and I was sitting upstairs, with the doors open between our rooms, she with her head buried in her hands over a thick book of fine print. I was sitting by the gas grate, the logs of which was sending out pretty sparks, and looking just like real wood burning. Dominie's room was just beyond his sister's, and he was getting some of his lessons ready for the next day.

Just as we was deepest in our thinks, the bell rung. Somehow Dominie seemed very alert, and running to meet the butler, he took the card off the tray. Hiding it behind him, he went into his sister's room.

Angelina had raised her head as soon as

she had heard the bell. It sounded to me like the same kind of a ring that had come on Thanksgiving afternoon. Going up behind his sister, Dominie clapped both hands over her eyes.

"Now, sis," says he, "you guess what nibs is poking round after you now!"

"Well," says Angelina laughing, "I guess it's Mr. Grey!"

"You've got another guess coming, Angel," says Dominie tormenting.

"Well, then," she says, though I see it cost her an effort, "I guess it's Mr. Earlham."

Dominie didn't loosen his hands over her eyes for a minute. Then he says:

"I shan't tell you whether it's Mr. Earlham, Dukeham, Lordham or Kingham, or any other kind of a 'ham,' till you give me that quarter you promised me if I would be a good boy this evening and let you study about your old mummies."

"O, Dominie," says Angelina, struggling, "do let me go! You'll get my hair all mussed up."

"Not a step," says he, determined, "till you fork over that twenty-fiver!"

Angelina giving him the quarter, he released her. Then she says:

"Aunt Phoebe, you have seen Mr. Grey; now I want you to see Mr. Earlham. Come down with me, won't you?"

"All right, Angelina," says I, "do you go down, and I'll be there after a bit."

But I set still and knitted and knitted. I was glad that for once they could talk without any third party around. Likewise I was thinking how unselfish it was for Angelina to invite me to go down stairs when she so seldom had him to herself.

After awhile I got up and put my knitting away, pushed my spitz curls even across my forehead, and made ready to go down.

Angelina and her caller was seated, side by side, at the living-room table, bending over a book he had just brought with him. He was looking at Angelina and talking earnestly. She was looking at the book which he seemed to be explaining something about. I could see the same light in her face that I had seen once before, and her color coming and going with her enthusiasm.

His face was very distinct from where I

stood, and I noted it well. He had large brown eyes that was full of fire and lustre. His forehead was high and broad, and his nose and mouth regular and well-formed. His chin was firm, and he smiled while he was talking, a gentle smile that seemed protecting to weakness, and asking for sympathy in return.

I stood still for a couple of minutes before I was discovered. Then his eyes, turning sideways to Angelina, took in a new figure, and he says:

"I wonder if this is not your aunt you were speaking of?" and rising at the same time.

"Why, Aunt Phoebe," says Angelina, "why didn't you speak? I had no idea you were there!" She introduced me to her friend and he shook hands with me, not a little tired shake of the finger tips, but a good, firm clasp of my whole hand, and I straightway made up my mind to like him.

I was used to Angelina's bright ways, but she seemed more full of fun and life than ever, though I noted she seldom met her caller's eye. On the contrary, I see that he looked at her constant. She didn't make

a move but what he see. Whether she was afraid of what she saw in his eyes, or was determined not to tell any story with hers, I couldn't rightly tell, but I wondered how any girl could be in the room with that man without looking in them wonderful eyes. His hair, I forgot to say, was thick and black, and a curly lock was thrown back off his forehead. But then, you see, Angelina was different than other girls. That was, likewise, the reason she didn't mind sharing him with me.

After awhile Angelina asked him to sing. To please her, I could see, more than himself, he went over to the piano. She went with him, and together they looked over some music which they both seemed well acquainted with. Finally they settled on one, and, in a fine bass voice, he sung what Angelina afterward told me was "Ave Maria" from Cavaleria Rusticana. When he got to the last line, which was "And guard and guide my aching heart," he looked right down at her with a volume of light in his eyes. But she never raised hers a mite, though I see her eyelids kind of tremble.

We passed a mighty pleasant evening

Down we all went together.

together,—he was so full of dry fun. I could see that every time he spoke to Angelina his voice was a little softer and more tender than at any other time. But I wasn't jealous, not a whit! I won't say what I might have been if I had been twenty years younger!

The next morning, after breakfast, I missed Angelina, and begun hunting for her. Somehow her young life seems to warm my old heart, and, as I told you, I was studying her more now, that I seen what a fine man was interested in her. I come across her in the little glass room built at one end of the porch. Into this room come some of the family nearly every morning for a sun bath.

Seeing me alone, she says:

"Come in, Aunt Phoebe, and get all the good out of old Sol you can." So I went in.

Coming to the point at once, as I had with her father in the library that night, for I felt they was both missing the best in life, though in different ways, I says:

"Angelina, I like Mr. Earlham. He appears to have a heart!"

"Well," says she, laughing, "he would hardly be living if he didn't."

"Now, Angelina," says I, reproving-like, "you know very well what I mean, only for some reason you don't want to talk about that man. I ain't got no idle curiosity, but I can see you're not happy!"

Her large, expressive blue eyes looked wondering for a minute, and then yielding.

"Well, Aunt Phoebe," says she, "I believe I can trust you. You seem to see right down to the bottom of things, which people too often look over. But why don't you think I'm happy? I'm sure I've everything to make me so; and I am very grateful."

"Yes," says I, "no doubt you be! But you don't care for all this frippery as much as your ma does!"

"Well, no," says she, hesitating-like, "it doesn't count as much with me as it does with the rest. But mother says when I get to be as old as she is, I will see that it is 'money that makes the mare go' every time; and that about the most important thing in life is an 'establishment.' Perhaps my views will change," and she give a little sigh.

"But," says I, "do you think your views really *will* change?"

"Well, looking at it from my standpoint," says she, real modest, "it seems to me that it is what we are, more than what we have, that really counts in life. Riches may be ours to-day and gone to-morrow, but what our character is remains; and what our philosophy is, that we gain from our own experience and from contact with others, then stands us in good stead."

"And is them Mr. Earlham's views?" says I.

"I think they are, aunty," says she, "although we have never talked of anything that might lead to such personal subjects."

"Do you mean to tell me that Mr. Earlham has never talked to you on personal subjects, Angelina?" I continued. "Then he must have done all his courting with his eyes!"

"Well, about the last," says she, a little cold, "I can't say, as I don't look at them very much, but as to the first, I can answer very positively. He knows, from what he has heard mama say, that she wishes me to marry Mr. Grey, and he is too much of a man of honor to interfere. Ours is only a case of friendship."

"You poor things," says I, "to take up with a cold friendship, when you was made for each other!"

"But you don't understand, aunty," says she, enthusiastic, "what I mean by friendship! I don't mean acquaintance, but a coming together of minds in perfect harmony on every point, and forgetting there is anything else in the world different or higher than such an enjoyment; and I don't think there is!" she added firmly.

"Well, maybe that'll do for you," I spurted out, "but how do you think he can manage on that? What's he going to do when you have married your 'establishment' and your liege lord says 'no more friendships than what is included in me!'"

I see her turn kind of pale and shudder, but real brave she says:

"Maybe by that time he will have won his professorship and can find some one to love."

"Now you listen to me," says I, "I ain't lived forty odd year for nothing. When you have found your mate,—another mind that responds to yours in everything—you can

hunt all over the world after that for another and have no pay for your pains except a heartache; for you'll never find but one that's made for you—the other part of yourself, as it was. It's as foolish to think of some people's mating as though you took the handle of a washing-machine and used it to turn the valves of a steam engine with. They could never jibe. But when a young man and a young woman come together, as you have—and it don't happen once in a thousand times when they be so fit—then nothing on earth should keep them apart. Putting that all to one side, ain't your happiness no 'count?"

"Aunt Phoebe," says she, and her voice kind of faltered, though I see a brave light in her eyes, "my happiness is only of one little human being in a great system of worlds, of which we are only a very little part. I am only destined, by the Bible, to live some seventy odd years. What does that count when you consider the millions of years and the millions of inhabitants that this system has already, and will keep on, seeing the life of? I can feel sad, but I can

keep it to myself, and not make those about me unhappy. Remorse is the most terrible suffering anybody can go through. If I should disappoint mama in her plans, I am afraid it would seize me. I am perfectly willing to acknowledge to you, Aunt Phoebe, since I see the interest that you take in me, that I believe I will never meet another one like Mr. Earlham. We think alike on every subject. We both delight in study, in music, in art, in religion, in ethics. My mind receives immediate and tremendous momentum from contact with his, and my whole outlook is broadened in conversation with him. But my duty is unquestionably due father and mother, and, above every desire of my own, stands duty first and foremost!"

"Yes," says I, "right you be, if it's really duty. But I can't see but what wrecking your own and another life is some objection to holding to that kind of duty. But, leaving Mr. Earlham on one side, what about Mr. Grey?"

"Mr. Grey and I agree in very little," Angelina answered. "He says study bores him; music tires him; he can't see any

sense in wasting time painting. He never goes to church, except when he accompanies me; and as for ethics, he thinks the best ethics is to make the almighty dollar."

"Why, Angelina Colwell," I exclaimed, horrified, "don't you know you'd commit worse than murder to marry such a man? For you'd not only murder every fine feeling in your body, but every aspiration of your soul. Your life would be one long misery."

"I know, Aunt Phoebe," says she, "that you are right, but mama wants me to marry money. She says when I am married I'll get over all this craziness for study. But I think it will only lead me deeper in it, for it will be all I shall have to turn to."

"What do you study for?" I asked, willing to draw her out a little more.

"Why, to be of help to someone," says she; and then added, "I am so anxious to really count for something in the world. I was always anxious for study and to make my mind yield me the pleasure it was intended to; especially since I was seventeen"—and she looked thoughtful. "Then," she con-

tinued, "the first season of society rather swerved me from my task. I went into the swim of social gayety for a few months, but I found all the girls discontented and envious. That set me to thinking. I went to religion for my soul's needs, and to philosophy for my deductions on what I saw around me and my own experience. Study of men and women showed me what I could make of myself; and of the conditions of countries how fallible the rule of all men was. The study of theology taught me that all peoples had practically the same fundamental belief in one Father, or Maker, and that we were all brothers and sisters. I do not care to have anybody know all I glean for myself, for it is payment enough to feel the pleasure it gives me, but if I could only help a husband so that my work could count for his, then my joy would be full!"

"And such a husband you're preparing to give it to in Mr. Grey!" I couldn't help saying; and added: "what, after you was married, if Mr. Grey should lose all his money!"

"O aunty," says she, and she shuddered

and buried her face in her hands, "it is too horrible to think of!"

I tell you I made up my mind right then, Susanna, that I should do all I could to hinder such an awful sacrifice being made.

I couldn't keep the confab I'd had with Angelina out of my mind as I dressed for lunch that day. May all come out right!

Whatever is to come about an astrologer or anyone else, I'm sure will never be more interesting than this portrayal of my niece Angelina. But through all vicissitudes I shall always be

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER V.

Los Angeles, California,
December 22nd, 19—

My dear Susanna:

I be so full of stars, planets, moons and all kinds of heavenly bodies that I can think of nothing else.

Who would think, Susanna, that them innocent-looking little stars up there in the sky had such designs on us poor critters; for I always thought they was good for light and show alone! I declare it makes me tremble when I think of it; and I, for one, shall always courtesy to Jupiter every time I see it. For that one, they say, is my lucky star.

Hezekiah, according to his promise, the morning after the ball, took me to the astrologer's with him.

"Hezekiah," says I to him, as we were driving down the street, "what makes you go to any man to tell you what to do? Ain't your own common sense sufficient for you?"

"Why, Aunt Phoebe," says he, "there are a great many mysteries in life. This knowledge of the planets, and their being either alone in your heaven, or coming in contact with some other planet, so that your life is subject to the change, is one of them."

"What!" says I, "can't the Creator shoot His own stars around as He likes without our meddling with it?"

"Fortunes change," says Hezekiah, "science is advancing all the time, and what in the Bible times was simply alchemy, is now intelligent chemistry; what was superstition is now advanced astrology. By disregarding the advice of an astrologer, not long ago, I lost a big deal."

By this time we had arrived at the astrologer's. Going up a pair of stairs, we was ushered into a very handsome room, which was one of three. I looked around me well.

"Looks like it paid!" I whispered to Hezekiah.

We sat down in very fine easy-chairs. In a minute a tall man, fine-looking, quite stout, and with iron-gray hair, made his appearance. I see he knew Hezekiah well. Going

right up to him, and smiling friendly, he shook hands. But I didn't rise.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Colwell;" says he, "want to know if the planet is still favorable?"

"Yes," answered Hezekiah, "you know it was to wane during the end part of this month and come in contact with Saturn. You didn't know, at the last sitting, whether it meant good or evil."

"True, true," says the dickerer with the stars, and he drummed his fingers on the table and looked thoughtful. "Well, we will see;" and his face brightened. "And is this lady your mother?" says he.

"*Mother!*" says I, "I'll have you to know that my nephew was born two years before I was!" and you may imagine that I didn't look pleasanter than I felt.

Hezekiah laughed, and the man, seeing he'd dealt with the wrong party, says, in a soothing tone:

"I'm sure I beg your pardon. The light in here is quite dim, and you have your hat on which always makes a difference, you know.

"Which first?" says the astrologer to Hezekiah.

"Aunt Phoebe," says Hezekiah to me, "if it don't make any difference whatever to you—I have a business engagement in an hour which I must meet—I will go in first. Then I will leave the carriage for you and the driver will take you around to my store, and we can go home to dinner together. It takes about forty-five minutes to have your horoscope cast."

"Go right in," says I to Hezekiah. "I have nothing to do; I can just as well wait as not." So in he went.

Left by myself, I begun to study surroundings. There was the picture of lots of hands on the wall on one side. I picked up a circular lying on the table. On this was a quantity of reading; chief among which was several passages of Scripture. These seemed to me perfectly scandalous. The two I remember in particular was where David asked: "What evil is in mine hand?" and where it says of the woman: "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor."

It wasn't long before Hezekiah come out of the room where they'd been seeing how the stars intended to behave in the future for him. He was smiling and looked quite contented.

"Now, madam," says the astrologer, bowing, "if you will come," and real polite he held the door wide open for me to pass through. After I passed in, he says: "Be seated, madam," and he sat a chair for me. "Will you remove your gloves, please?" says he, and I begun to pull them slowly off. And then, Susanna Moses, what do you think he did? He took both my hands and turned the insides of them up to view! No need to tell me that man didn't have the devil's own insight! Then he took up a glass with a handle on it through which he peered at them.

"My, my," thinks I, "what funny glasses people do wear in this part of the country!"

Then the astrologer laid down the glass and took up a long pointed silver instrument. At this I begun to git scared.

"O, mister," says I, "if you see anything wrong with the inside of them hands, what

needs operating on, do, for goodness sakes, tell me out honest, so I can get a regular physician. Who would make the bread for Ephraim were them same hands to give out!" For I was going to save the means of support to our household comfort at any hazard.

"I'm not going to injure your hands," says he, "I am only looking for the life line. Yes, you have a good line," he continued, pointing to it with the instrument, and dividing it, by this means, off into sections, "you will live past the forty, fifty, sixty, seventy and almost into the eighty-year mark. They are strong ones.

"Yes, it is there," he went on, "the change from one partner to another. You are likely, madam, to lose your husband; I see a second marriage for you!"

"Good gracious!" I cried out, "you don't mean it? Then I'll start this very night for home, and if death be more spry than I be, it'll have to hustle." And I raised up quick to reach for my mantle that I had laid on a chair when I went in.

"Madam," says the astrologer, and I could see it was a matter of so much indifference

to him he was actually trying to keep back a smile, "if you'll listen to reason, you will not be in such haste. Your partner will live many years yet; I was only telling you of the probability I saw in your hand!"

With that I breathed easy again, and decided not to take the train that night after all, if that was the case. Anyone who knows Phoebe Ann will know that she never has even glanced at any other man since she gave her heart and hand to Ephraim Lysander! But still, I wish he had described him a little bit, it would have been interesting to hear,—now that I was over my fright.

But the most surprising thing he told me was that I had a great deal of music in me, and should have made a good public singer! In fact, that Mercury was claiming me all the time. Who would have thought that one of them big stars had inspected all the people in the world and then hit on Phoebe Ann in little Wayneville, to have set his affections on?

"I shall take lessons right away," says I, "and then I guess Lyddy Skinner won't have it all her own way when I get back to Wayne-

ville!"—and I could see he was real pleased with my taking his advice, by the way he smiled.

To think I had to live forty odd years before I found out the great talent that lay silent within me. I might have been a prima donna by this time and had men kneeling at my feet! Now I can see why other people have been discerning where I have been too modest to claim any superiority. For didn't the Church Music Committee—though Lyddy Skinner said, in her mean way, that it was only to please Ephraim who'd given fifty dollars extra toward running expenses—ask me to be one of them, and had since asked my opinion about several music matters? But I shall straightway commence studying singing! I do hope you'll be to church the first Sunday I sing a solo.

He then told me of several things that had already happened and of some more things to come. Chief among these was that I would get a telegram from a distance bearing bad news. I must own this made me kind of nervous. Then, seeming to be done with this part of the proceedings, he says:

"But I will only give you a slight palm-reading; I will spend most of the time on astrology."

At that he took a geography off his desk and opened it to the map of the United States. Maybe you remember that I was never very good at that study; and now I hoped he wouldn't ask me to bound too many states. Howsoever, he only asked me what state and town I was born in. When I told him Wayneville, Vermont, he found it as quick as though that was the only place on the map.

Then he took up a piece of paper with a big blue circle on it, and lines running from different points on the inside of the ring to the center, like a wheel. On this he begun to put down figures, after he'd found some of them on the map. Looking up, he says:

"What time of the day were you born?"

"Well," says I, "I don't remember, seeing as I was so young." At this facetious reply, he kind of smiled and then says:

"Please remember as near as you can if it's been told you. It'll make a difference in the planets visiting the houses."

I figured out I had heard my mother say it was somewhere about ten o'clock at night. This he set down also in figures. I listened with indignation to his next question:

"How old are you?"

"Now, look here," says I, "I'm willing to answer any reasonable question, but how old I be is my own business, and I can't see that you or the stars need to concern yourselves about it!"

"Well," says he, and I thought he had given up the point, "what month was you born in?" I told him, and he did some more figuring. Then says he:

"What year?"

This I also told him, and he applied himself to that scribbling again. Now, Susuana, don't you smile, when you read how cute he got my age out of me by subtracting the difference between the year I was born and this present year. To tell you the truth, I never thought of it till he said:

"Then you are forty-eight years old!"

But this wasn't all. Having scribbled and figured till it come out to suit him, he proceeded to give me his conclusions. He says:

"Jupiter is high in the heaven, and through the rest of this month everything will go well with you. But about the middle of January Saturn is evil to the Moon and Jupiter comes against them. Then Jupiter will surely do something to you and your affairs. It may be a money loss, or a disappointment, or the loss of some dear friend: it is hard to tell. The signs are evil."

"My!" says I, immediately alarmed, "it won't be my partner, will it?"

"No," says he, "for the sign is not over the seventh house, which is the house of marriage." Then he went on: "There is one of your relations, by marriage, whose happiness depends a good deal upon you. I should judge it was a young woman by the signs. You can be successful in marrying her happily if you will use your influence. In fact, I should say it depended upon the moves you make."

"Now," says I, "that's interesting. I declare, I shall be more set than ever, hereafter, to have Angelina joined to Mr. Earlham."

He ended up by telling me that Jupiter, my lucky star, would get higher and higher

in the heavens, and that as I grew older my fortunes would constantly rise.

Seeing as he'd done giving me the information which had been given him from that interview with his friends in the other world, I prepared to go. Yet, as I went down the stairs, I couldn't keep that telegram I was to receive out of my mind.

The horses and them two brothers,—for I couldn't keep the notion that they was such out of my mind,—was waiting for me. As soon as I got in the carriage we set out for Hezekiah's notion store. We hadn't gone far when I see a telegraph boy coming towards us on his wheel.

"O," thinks I, sudden, "he's looking around the town trying to find me with that telegram!" And I begun to cast around in my mind to see how I could make them brothers up in front hear me above all the noise of the city. Only one way come to me,—for the boy was coming every minute nearer,—and so I took the point of my parasol and standing up I jabbed it between the shoulders of the one that wasn't driving. A man that had had a gun put to his chest never

jumped quicker, and his face looked like he had seen a ghost when he turned round.

"Stop!" says I, hollering, "on penalty of losing your place! Can't you see that boy with the telegram is trying his best to catch this carriage? More'n likely I shall have to start this very night for the East!"—and I'm sure I couldn't have been mistaken in hearing him say to the other one, as he drew in his horses,—"And, in my soul, I wish you were!"

As the messenger had now come up, I didn't pay no attention to the driver, but leaned way out to catch that boy, for how could he be expected to know me! Seeing as he didn't look like he was going to hold up, I just leaned over, as he got up to the carriage, and slid the handle of my parasol under his wheel. Of course his wheel went one way and he went the other! To be sure, I was sorry to stop him so sudden, but I made certain in my mind he would thank me when he rose and I had told him I was Phoebe Ann, for saving his hunting any further. When he did rise, he just glared at me, and, holding firm to the handle of

his machine, he says, madder'n a hornet:

"What in thunder do you want, old woman? I ain't done nothing to you. I'll call the police as sure as my name's Mikey Finnigan!"

"Well, young sir," says I, drawing up, "I'll have you know this is Phoebe Ann Lysander, and without any more back talk you just hand that telegram out you got for me!"

"Drat the telegram!" says he, "I ain't got no telegram for you." And then, making a face, he began to sing, as he fixed the pedal to get on:

"O Phoebe Ann; O Phoebe Ann; I'll tell your ma,
A-flirting with the fellers on the railroad car!"

and swung down the street again out of sight. I wonder how on earth he could ever have heard about that Mormon!

Well, it was no use standing still any longer, and so we drove on. Presently we come up in front of a big store that took in a whole block, and the horses drew up to the curb.

"My," thinks I, "Hezekiah must have had a pull with these people to have got them to let him have room enough for his notion store inside this big concern. Maybe he has to divvy up the proceeds, beside paying his rent! No wonder he looks so worried some of the time."

There was throngs of people going in the door, and I heard one lady say to another, "There's Mr. Colwell's carriage."

Going up to a pompous-looking man walking up and down the aisle, and who I knew must be the proprietor, I says, bowing low:

"How d'ye do? I'm sorry to trouble you, but could you tell me which is Mr. Colwell's notion store?"

"Notion counter, aisle number four, to your right," says he, and walked away as though the earth weren't good enough for his feet.

Well, I suppose such a great concern, and money pouring in your coffers as fast as drops of water in a storm, must make anyone feel important.

I passed by counters of laces and fans, gloves and silk, till I come to aisle number four. Seeing everybody was so busy, I

didn't want to ask any unnecessary questions, and so I just walked along slow, all eyes, looking for Hezekiah and his notions. At last I come to the notions, but Hezekiah wasn't there.

There was some real nice-looking girls standing behind the counter, and one in particular attracted my attention. Still, she was not so pretty as one I had seen at the lace counter. That one had dark curling hair, black eyes, rosy cheeks, white teeth, and such pretty white skin. She was real plump, too. This one, though very pretty, was slighter and a blonde. Going up to her, I says:

"How d'ye do, my dear? Can you tell me if Mr. Colwell's been here this morning and gone away again?"—Then, seeing a desk at the lower end of the counter where a young lady was making change, I says, "But I see he has, since there's his desk, and he's left someone in his place to keep an eye on the money took in on his notions!"

"O dear!" laughed the girl, "his office is on the second floor, and this is only one of the cash desks."

"You don't say!" says I.

I had turned away, thinking I would go upstairs quick and find him before he slid out, when my manners returned to me. I certainly had a duty to perform to them girls that was helping Hezekiah get a little money together. So, commencing at the farther end of the counter, I set out to shake hands and give a word of encouragement to each of them.

"My dears, you're doing well!" says I. "Now just keep it up and some time maybe Mr. Colwell can buy an interest in one of the other counters, when I'm sure he'll not forget you!" Some of them shook hands and laughed, and some was too busy waiting on customers and fixing their goods to do so.

When I got to the pretty girl, which I heard one of the others call Mirandy, she says:

"Well, as Mr. Colwell owns the whole concern now, I don't see as there's much chance for us to give him a push!"

"What did you say?" I says, leaning over the counter. "You don't mean to tell me

that Hezekiah Colwell owns this building, these goods, and all these waiters?"

She laughed and looked at some of the other girls at the counter. Then she says:

"Exactly! That is, he owns the building and the goods, but only the time of his help from eight in the morning till six at night."

"Well, my soul!" says I, and I couldn't say another word.

Seeing as I'd shook hands with some of them, it would be too bad to make the others feel slighted; and so I made up my mind to go from the bottom to the top of the store doing my duty as a relation of the family. Tackling the next counter, I offered my hand to as many as I see had time to take it, and passed on. It seemed to be real welcome to them, too, for they all laughed so pleasant. I don't s'pose Lucy Jane puts herself out to do it once a year!

I'd finished up four counters when another pompous-looking man, like the first I'd seen, stepped up to me and says:

"This way, madam! We've caught you at last. We've missed quite enough goods from our counters for the past six months.

You haven't been quick enough this time!"

I was turning upon such a tone of impudence when I see there was two others waiting beside him. I opened my mouth to explain, but one of them says:

"It'll do you no good to scream; we shall only call the police and have you locked up, if you do; so come right along to the searching room. I believe there's a cool hundred dollars on you now, from the way you've been reaching over the counters for the past twenty minutes. This way!"—And, Susanna, they actually laid hold of my arm!

Flying both arms aloft, I hollered:

"Murder, help, robbers! Help!"—for I had that cameo ring and seven dollars in my pocket-book!

Just as I opened my mouth to yell again, and I tell you there was a crowd around by this time, I see, through one of the openings between the people, Hezekiah coming along talking earnestly with a couple of men. Hearing a woman's voice, they come straight towards us to see what was the matter. As soon as I see him, I let forth:

"Hezekiah, Hezekiah, they're killing me!"

At that he just leaped through the crowd, and thundered out:

"Hands off! What do you mean by such actions!" Those men looked scared to death. Then he says to me:

"Come, Aunt Phoebe, it is nearly lunch time;" and took my arm.

Saucers are nothing compared to them men's eyes when they see that. And all the floor-walkers—for such I found them pretentious men to be—bowed way over when we passed them. Among the crowd I thought I caught a glimpse of Mr. Grey talking to that pretty girl at the lace counter—but maybe I was mistaken.

We drove home almost in silence. I declare I was so shook about by what had happened that I didn't have no appetite for talk. And I suppose Hezekiah was thinking about his business.

After we had sat down to the lunch table, Hezekiah says to the family, kind of smiling:

"Aunt Phoebe hasn't told us what she's cut out for yet, for I suppose she knows by this time," and then looked at me.

I can't help but own up to some pride when I answered:

"To be a public singer and make a great success!"

Hezekiah dropped his fork; Lucy Jane kept the cup suspended in air out of which she was drinking; Angelina looked interested, though kind of full of laugh; while Dominie give a low whistle, and says:

"Gee!"

I wish you wouldn't tell Ephraim yet about the voice I have had showed up to me. I should like to have him surprised after I have gone through a course of cultivation.

Write soon and I will write sooner.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER VI.

Los Angeles, California,
December 27th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

It was the night before Christmas. Hezekiah and Lucy Jane had gone to an old-fashioned English Christmas gathering, Dominie had got permission to go to some of his companions' houses for the evening, and Angelina, Mr. Grey, Mr. Earlham and myself was going to a Working Girls' Club my niece had started and encouraged.

Dominie, I'm feared, has come in for a very small part of my letter-writing to you, but he's a regular boy all through. He's as full of mischief as an egg's full of meat, though you'd never think it by his face. And this is the way he got his nickname. His real name is Dominick, but from the time he was born, his ma says, he always had a serious cast of countenance. He looked so much like a parson that they shortened his name down to Dominie. But like Charity,

that covers a multitude of sins, so that face covers a quantity of mischief.

But, as I was saying, we set out to go to the club. We made two couples,—one of which I intended should be Angelina and Mr. Earlham. As we started to go out of the house, I see Mr. Grey preparing to cast Mr. Earlham to my share. I won't deny but what I would rather have his little finger for company than the whole of Mr. Grey's body, but that didn't count. Angelina was the one they had both cast their eyes on, and not Phoebe Ann! So I says, clear and distinct:

"Angelina, you've monopolized Mr. Grey so much to yourself I ain't had any chance to get acquainted with him, which I'm bound to do, hearing so much good said of him by both your pa and ma. Besides," I continued, turning to Mr. Grey—who was looking at me a shade darker than his name—"your having that glass over your near-sighted eye makes it very safe for you to help me across the streets. We must certainly go together."

I could see love and gratitude right all

over Mr. Earlham's face, and Angelina was looking at me with eyes full of expression. But she was a good actress that time. She actually looked regretful at Mr. Grey as she said:

"Why, aunty, since you're my guest, of course we will have to yield! Isn't that so, Mr. Grey?" And she smiled at him bright enough to pay him for walking with a Hottentot.

Mr. Grey managed to mumble something between his teeth, with a make-believe smile and bow, but that nasty sneer about his mouth was worse than ever. But, la, I didn't care. I would have walked with Lucifer himself to have give two such true hearts happiness.

I fixed it so as to have Angelina and Mr. Earlham walk behind, for I ain't forgot my own courting days yet! As we walked along, I says to Mr. Grey:

"I suppose you know Los Angeles from end to end?"

Well, I wish, Susanna, I could give you the drawl he uses in his way of talking.

"O, doncherknow, that's saying a good

deal! There's all kind of places and life in the city, and one can't be expected to know any but the best!"

"That's true," says I, "but it seems to me I saw you first in a place that I wouldn't call the best, and that was at the ball! How they ever could have dragged such people as my relations there, is a mystery to me. Angelina, I know, didn't want to go, and Mr. Earlham wasn't there!"

I see he felt specially spiteful to Mr. Earlham and he says savage:

"For the good reason that he couldn't get an invitation—he's not in our set! And as for the ball, it has been the finest thing of the season. Our best people were there!"

"Well," says I, "I may be old-fashioned, but I can't see any difference between sin in high places and sin in low places, and them women's dresses connived with sin enough to drive me home."

"O, as to that," says he scornful, "we don't see any harm."

Happening to look up, I see the stars was real bright in the sky. Now I knew it wasn't no use to ask questions, the answer to which

meant real knowledge, of Mr. Grey. So I turned to Mr. Earlham, and says:

"I'd be much obliged to you, if you would point Jupiter out to me. Seeing as he's my lucky star, I'd kind of like to keep my eye on him. For he's likely to rise higher and higher. And in that case," says I, "I might lose sight of him."

"Why," says Mr. Earlham, smiling, "are you interested in astronomy? It surely is a wonderful subject. But I didn't know there was any probability of Jupiter changing his position to such an extent as you speak of! But, there he is!" says he, and we all stopped stock still to look up where he was pointing. I tell you I looked at him good.

"How bright he is, and yet how small they all look," I says. "He's a little bit bigger than some of the rest, but that's not saying much."

"No," says Mr. Earlham, "and yet Jupiter is more than three hundred times as big as the earth, and its seasons twelve times as long as ours."

"My, my," says I, "what awful solemn people they must be up there! For think of

the quantity of clothes it must take to cover them every season, twelve times as long as we need them! But then their married lives would be twelve times as long as ours, and that would be a great comfort!" and I thought of Ephraim.

Mr. Earlham, turning to Angelina, laughed as he says:

"Yes, and the walk to the club would likewise be twelve times as long, which to me would be very delightful."

I could hear that man by my side grind his teeth, though he covered it with a cough.

I make no doubt if it had been any other light but the moon I should have seen Angelina's face take on a rosy hue. But I see that she didn't raise her eyes to her partner's face, only looked straight ahead. Susanna, can you account to me for the fact that we force ourselves to appear indifferent to the very people that we like best of all on the earth, while the people we don't care two pence for we smile on and give 'em our company and our brightest looks?

Mr. Grey was the hardest person to talk to I ever struck, but talk I did; because I

could plainly see he was trying to listen to what was being said behind him. And this I was bound he shouldn't. I found we could hear what was being said by the others real distinct, for I heard Angelina say, in response to some remark of Mr. Earlham's:

"Why should money make any difference in life? Of course it is easy to be seen why blood should, for that flows in our veins and determines, very largely, what our ambitions and natural capabilities are. But money touches us only on the outside. Our minds, in poverty or wealth, are the same. The only aspiration that seems to me worth while is to climb to the highest pinnacle of usefulness and unselfishness. There is only one society worth mingling in, and that is the society of minds tuned to the same key as one's own, and struggling to climb themselves and help others to climb. This idea of feathers and jewels and fine houses being necessary to happiness is as foolish, to me, as the idea of the natives of the torrid zones wearing a silk hat and gew-gaws without any other apparel. It is all so superficial!"

Wouldn't you love a girl like that? No

wonder Mr. Earlham did, and the more he was with her the deeper in he was getting. My eyes wasn't blind.

It wasn't long before we come to the house where the club meetings was held. Angelina hadn't told me she'd had a Christmas tree fixed up, and a present for each one, because she always tries to hide anything she does.

As we went into the room I could see a crowd of girls there that was a study, I tell you! Most all of them was fixed up in finery of some sort. In fact I believe Angelina was the plainest dressed girl there.

As soon as Angelina appeared among them, I could see they just worshipped her. Not that they acted scared and quieted down. On the contrary, they crowded around her. Any worship that acts strange and cold in sight of its object, is pretty apt to be fear instead of anything else. I guess that's what is the matter with our prayer meetings to home, sometimes. If we really worshipped the Lord, we'd all be cordial and active in taking a part for Him, no matter who was around. But we've got more reverence than worship, which is a vast deal different.

Only people we can set outside our lives we can afford that kind of reverence to. The people that come in it, like Angelina's in those girls', get the worship that means nestling up close to them, and feeling their presence. Angelina laughed and talked and shook hands with all of them. I never see her so much in her element before, and I could see Mr. Earlham was enjoying her pleasure with her.

But Mr. Grey looked as though he scorned 'em all. I see him taking note of the different ones, and I see him give a very warm look to that girl who I'd seen at the lace counter, and she immediately became rosier than ever and dropped her eyes.

Happening to look over in another part of the room, at that other pretty girl, the blonde, who was at the notion counter, I see she was watching, too, and I see she was as jealous as could be of the looks of Mr. Grey to the other girl. I must confess it seemed strange to me that two girls should be jealous, or even notice the looks of a man that would never give them any honest attention. I see, too, that between every look cast at the dark

complected girl, Mr. Grey looked quick to see if Angelina had seen him.

But, landy, Angelina had forgot that such a man as Mr. Grey had ever drawn the breath of life. She was only conscious of that group of laughing girls around her and the presence of the one congenial spirit in the world to her.

Pretty soon Angelina give the directions to have the lights put out and the candles of the tree lighted. This showed up the beautifulest sight you ever seen. The girls stood around it and looked with smiling faces on the bright tinsel and dangling ornaments, and there was just enough light from them candles reflected on the faces and dresses to make everyone look pretty.

After the tree and its trimmings had been admired quite a spell, Angelina says:

"Girls, I have asked Mr. Earlham to give us one of the Christmas tales of Norway. I think this is a good time for him to tell it to us!"—And she turned to him.

There was an assent of approval from the company, and Mr. Earlham stepped forward. The girls, most of them, found seats; and

those that didn't either sat on the edge of the tables or squatted on the floor. It was easy to see why they wanted him to talk.

I soon discovered that, next to Angelina, he was a favorite, and no wonder; for he certainly looked very handsome as he stood there. The candlelight showed them glorious eyes to advantage, and illuminated that lock of curly black hair thrown back so careless off his broad white forehead. I don't think I've ever told you about his voice. Well, it is the richest, softest, tenderest, manliest voice I ever heard. It is music to listen to it. In them modulated tones, while everything was so still you could hear a pin drop, he begun:

"It was the night before Christmas, and the air was cold and frosty. The stars glittered in the sky, though not very distinctly, for you remember that it stays partial daylight till midnight in Norway. But it was like to the hour of our deep twilight in the East.

"The little hamlet was still as death, for Kris Kringle is a god to be worshipped in that land. One sound, only, broke the still-

ness, as the clock struck twelve. This was the strains of beautiful music sung by a great choir of voices in front of the village church. For weeks, men and maidens had been rehearsing this music, and they had done justice to their work. . . .

"In a shabby little hut, where the family were kneeling in devotion, while the music was being rendered by this choir, a great event was soon to happen that bade fair to change the whole life of the devotees. Many years before, one of their family had died a miser, and no one had ever been able to find his money, though they had looked for it long and earnestly. The father of the family, who also knelt in prayer, said that if only it might be possible to find this money, he would give half of it to the cause of Kris Kringle. . . .

"Just as the clock had finished striking twelve there stood before him one of the elves that had helped bury the gold. In a sepulchral tone he began thus to address the man———"

"*Wo-ho, Wo-ho!*" came a terrific shout from the stairway, and into the room bounced—

I just ran 'round and 'round that tree as tight as I could jump.

Susanna, I tremble as I write it—the *Devil and his Angels!*

There they was, dressed in white, with the most awful faces you ever see, and horns sticking high up in the air. The girls, with one wild scramble, and many cries of fear, jumped up on the table, or crouched underneath it.

I made straight for that tree! And sure enough, I was the one they was after! And I kited. I just ran round and round that tree as tight as I could jump.

"O Lord," I kept saying, in between my gasps, "if you'll only steer them off this time from catching me, I'll never go to dickering with my future again. I'll never look upon the face of an astrologer as long as I live!" And this I says over and over again.

I was nigh tuckered out when I see a chance to get to the stairs. Down I went and dove into the street.

And now the steps seemed to be following me faster than ever! I had got most to Angelina's house, which wasn't more than six blocks from the club, when I see the Evil One coming toward me from the opposite

direction to head me off! But my legs must have been given wings! I run up the drive and fairly tumbled into the front door. There I stopped to take breath, after I'd made the butler put the lock and chain on it.

After I'd got to my room I dropped on my knees beside my bed in thanksgiving for one more deliverance! But I hadn't been in the house more'n ten minutes when I heard the telephone ring, and the butler come up and said it was for me.

"O," says I, "it ain't the devil trying to get me, is it?" He looked at me like he thought I was plumb crazy, and then walked off.

With fear and trembling I took up the receiver. I could hardly get breath or stop my heart beating so it could be heard for me to say:

"Hello!"—But I got it out.

In a minute I heard Angelina's voice saying:

"Is that you, Aunt Phoebe?"

"Yes," says I, "where's the devil?"

I could hear her laugh, peal after peal, and when she could speak she says:

"It's a shame, aunty, but it was only Dominie and the boys he went to see tonight. They came around to have some fun with the girls."

"Then why did they chase me around that tree?" says I, indignant.

"Why, aunty," says she, "that was Mr. Earlham trying to catch you to tell you who it was! He saw you were so frightened he was afraid you might catch your clothes on fire from some of the candles. I'm so sorry, aunty," says she, though I could tell from her voice she was choked with laughing, "but won't you come back to see the presents given to the girls? The coachman will bring you."

"Not if they each was to receive a diamond necklace," says I, "and the biggest was reserved for me!"

I concluded it was time for me to take some rest after my gymnasium work, for I ain't as young as I once was, so I went to bed. If I ever get back whole to Wayneville, I think I sha'n't want to leave home again.

Don't mention about my voice to Liddy Skinner. She might take some extra lessons

so I couldn't catch up to her, and I intend to be the ornament of the town when I return.

Write me just what Ephraim said and did on Christmas. Every motion that man makes is worth recording. Write before you receive this.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER VII.

Los Angeles, California,
December 29th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

Christmas here was as different as Thanksgiving was from the same in the East. Everything was green, and the sun was hot. Roses was in full bloom in the garden and the birds singing gay. To be sure, they had a Christmas tree to please Dominie, but you couldn't get no Christmas feeling in the air.

It's the way the day is celebrated that makes it seem so different. They don't have no community feeling or interest here. They don't appear to know their next-door neighbor, and everyone is wrapped up in himself. Now you know how it is at Wayneville. There we know everyone, and change presents and have meetings at different houses, and with it all such a good time.

I'm not going to tell you about all the Christmas presents we received here. I have other things I'm too anxious to write about.

I will say, though, that I got a very full share, more than I shall know what to do with, I guess.

Among other presents of Angelina's, I noticed two books. They both attracted my attention, for they was both bound beautiful. I says:

"I suppose you've got a real nice novel here, Angelina. When you get through with it, maybe you'll let me read it!"

I noticed her face kind of flushed with pleasure when she looked at it, but she says:

"It ain't a novel, aunty, but I'd be glad to have you read it if you would like to. I don't read a novel once a year, and this Mr. Earlham knows, so he has sent me something I would be interested in. You will notice it is 'Spencer's First Principles.'"

"Thank you," says I, running through the pages of the book, "but you read first what his principles are, then maybe I'll tackle it. But, Angelina, I believe you're unlike any other girl in the world!"

"O, aunty," says she, looking up with such a beseeching look in her big blue eyes that

I felt conscience-smitten before I knew what for, "please don't you say so too! I have been told that so much that I feel as lonely as though I were the only human being in the world, sometimes. I have moments in which I wildly wish I were frivolous and given to every sort of foolish desire—such as society, dancing, fancy clothes, novels, and chewing gum!" And there was actually tears in them eyes.

My conscience pricked me harder'n ever, and stooping over I kissed her forehead and says, "It's only because you are so young and attractive to be putting aside the things that other girls take to, that made me speak as I did. Howsomever," says I, anxious for that little sad expression that had come up in her eyes to be chased away, "I suppose this other book, the white one bound in gilt, is from your other admirer! I see this is a Prayer Book! Now it would never have struck me that Mr. Grey was much on his prayers! But perhaps, after all, the 'De'il's nae sae ill as he's ca'ed.'"

"More likely, Aunt Phoebe," says she, and I see there was mischief in her eyes, "he wants

me to carry him with me to my prayers! I am quite convinced that he doesn't waste much time himself along those lines."

In the afternoon Mr. Earlham arrived. I knew the ring as soon as I heard it, and if my heart kind of give a jump of pleasure, what must Angelina's have done? I declare that man must have a powerful lot of magnetism to make people like him so. I can't help wondering how it's all going to come out with Angelina, because I can see her struggling so not to give him her heart, but only the companionship of her mind, believing that it's her duty to abide by the choice her father and mother has laid out for her.

I see every time Mr. Grey comes my nephew and niece are especially attentive to him, though Lucy Jane takes the lead by far. Hezekiah has such confidence in her that he just lets her manage everything but getting the money, and that part she don't seem anxious to take the lead in. Lucy Jane never appears to lose sight for an instant of that fortune Mr. Grey has inherited; and it does seem immense. I believe it is about forty thousand dollars a year income. But

I don't believe that Angelina cares whether it is that much or forty cents.

Lucy Jane stayed right with Mr. Earlham and Angelina all the time. When I see a proper space in the talk, I says, thinking it a good time to get some information:

"Can you tell me where to find a real good singing teacher, Mr. Earlham? One that'll be very careful of a young and tender voice?"

"Yes," says he, "indeed I can. I suppose there's someone you've taken an interest in that you want to make the most of!" and he smiled.

"Yes," says I, and I give Angelina and Lucy Jane a warning look, though I see they was both ready to split. "The party has never had no instruction along this line, and her voice being kind of green, as it was, needs to be proper seasoned before it's ready for use, when I expect it'll kindle a fire in all men's hearts that hear it!"

"O, dear," laughed Mr. Earlham, "don't bring me under the spell, I beseech you, I want to save my heart from burning up too young!"

He needn't have tried to cover up that sidelong glance he give Angelina. My own opinion was that it was burning up pretty lively, and would soon be such a raging bonfire that it would burn up the desire for everything else in the world in order to reach that girl that was so earnestly studying the picture on the wall just in front of her that minute.

"Well," says he, bringing his attention back to me again, "the gentleman I would recommend is Herr Mincke, in the Blanchard Building."

"I thought you said it was a man," says I.

With that he just give a great hearty laugh. "Then let us call him Herr Professor, which means, in German, Mr. Professor!" says he.

Having got full particulars where to find this "Her," I made up my mind to consult him about that great gift of mine at the first seasonable minute.

In the evening Mr. Grey come, but I didn't even take the pains to go down and see him. I noticed, too, that my niece and this man was left much more to themselves

than ever Angelina and Mr. Earlham was, when Hezekiah and Lucy Jane was home.

The next day I set out for the "Herr's." I went alone, purposely, for I didn't want to tax my voice talking, and I didn't want no audience till I could make them notes flow out liquid as a bird's. One thing I was set on—to make Ephraim extra proud of me when I arrived home!

After hunting around a while, I found the Blanchard Building. There I found lots of names all framed in the hall.

Pretty soon I plucked up courage to ask a boy standing by an iron cage if "Herr" was in. Says he:

"What woman is it you want?"

"It ain't a woman at all, it's a man that teaches singing," says I.

"O," says he, "I guess you mean the Dutchman on the second floor. Step in!"

"What for?" says I. "I want to see 'Herr!'"

"Step in!" says he, again, "and I'll take you to him."

Seeing as other people now begun to run for the cage, I made up my mind to be one

of the number. But, Susanna, it was no wonder they run for that cage! We'd no sooner got in and got the door shut than an earthquake struck us! Up we shot! Thinking I was on my way to Glory, I give one screech.

"Second floor!" says the iron cage boy, throwing open the door.

I just tumbled off, then up they shot again. After my knees had quit shaking a little, I begun to look around for "Herr." I see a door just ahead of me with his name on, and so I stepped up to it and knocked. No one come, and I opened the door a little and peeked in. I see a beautiful room and nice easy chairs; also I heard voices in the back somewhere.

Concluding that my knock hadn't been heard, I closed the door again and then, taking hold of the handle with both hands, I shook it with all my might! The glass rattled in the door, and it made enough noise to raise the dead. I heard quick footsteps right away, now, and in a second the door was flung wide open. In it stood a short, thick-set Dutchman looking wild-eyed,

with hair all upset—like he had just run his fingers through it.

"Vat iss mit you de matter?" says he, excited. "My glass you vill haf to pay for, if you it braek!"

With grand scorn, I paid no attention to his comments. I says:

"I wish to see the singing teacher about lessons."

"That man iss me," says he. "Valk in!" and he held the door while I passed into the room.

"Take von zeet," says he, and I set down.

"You haf von fror-leen,—darter—vas iss it you call him?—that to take lessons vish vill?"

"No," says I, "I hain't got any 'fror,' if that's what you call daughter, either lean or fat, and if she was either one or t'other, I don't see that it would be any of your business! I wish to take lessons myself."

"Mein Gott!" says he, rolling his eyes up to the ceiling and running his fingers through his hair, "I think you anuder teacher vill better find, nicht wahr?"

"Well," says I, "I don't know anything

about your 'nicht wahr,' but Mr. Earlham told me that I couldn't find a better teacher, and I'm bound to have the best." And I felt as dogged in my resolution as ever—for Ephraim was at the other end of the string.

When I said this, he jumped right up onto the arm of his chair and says, eager-like:

"Och! Herr Earlham, you said? He iss von fine man! If you dat his friend are, dat anuder matter iss. Ve vill hear your voice! To the piano coom!" says he, walking fast over to it, which was just through the partition in the next room. Meanwhile he beckoned over his shoulder with his hand, though his back was toward me.

"Now," says "Herr," "Zo!" and he showed me where to stand.

Sitting down to the piano, and running his fingers through his hair, he leaned his body half way over, and with both hands just made a grand count of all the keys to once from end to end, and ended up with a crash. Then, giving an extra hitch to his stool, and feeling his necktie to see if it was in place, he says:

"You von high voice haf in speaking, I think he vill be soprano."

"Yes," says I, "make it soprano if you can," for I was thinking of them high tones of Liddy Skinner.

"Very goot," says he, "ve vill dis middle G now strike!"—and he struck the key like he meant business.

You know, Susanna, I ain't never tried to sing very much myself, but I've watched them that did. I see they was never bashful about the faces they made, nor the way they opened their mouths, like they was going to swallow all around them to once. So, taking tight hold of the piano with one hand, and clenching the other till it made a fist, I opened my mouth just as far as I could stretch it, and with all the power in my lungs I let that G slide!

And it slid! First it struck the ceiling, and then, thinking its exercise should not be cut off too soon, it shook the walls, and then, like sin visiting the heads of the innocent, made us stone deaf.

"Mein stars in Himmel!" cried the Herr, jumping to his feet. "You dis city vill mit

your noise fill. I vill a notice from de landlord haf dis very night, for de peace disturbing!"—calming down a little, in a minute, he set down on the piano stool again.

"Now," says he, "hush—soft!" And he held up one hand. "Dis vay!"—and he put his head down, his chin kind of inside his collar, and rolling his eyes up to the side of the wall he sang "G———."

The tone was certainly beautiful. Before he had brought his eyes back to me I had copied what he told me. With one hand upraised, my chin drawn back of my collar, and my eyes rolled up in the same way, just as he finished the tone I took it up. I was sorry I couldn't see the approval which I knew my copying so near must have on him when he first looked at me, but I was bound to keep my eyes fixed on that spot on the wall.

When I did look at him, after my victorious effort, I wondered whether he was mad or going to laugh. I suppose it made him discouraged to think that after all the time he'd spent on his own voice I could get it the second time trying. He run his hands

through his hair again and give a long breath. Then he jumped up and come over to me.

"You breathe not right," says he, "now vatch me!" And he shut his mouth tight and begun to grow bigger and bigger, and his face redder and redder, and then he let out a little sizzling noise through his lips. I begun to get disgusted.

"Well," says I, "of all things! What if I should go through the streets of Wayneville holding my teeth together and getting bigger and bigger and redder and redder! They'd think I was struck with apoplexy, and call the doctor as quick as you could say 'Jack Robinson.' No," I continued, waxing emphatic, "you may be all right enough on the singing question, but you've got no right to find fault with the way the Lord has sot down his rules to breathe!"

"Vat you speak I do not know," says the Dutchman, "but I vill you show!"

Susanna, what do you think he now proceeded to do? Coming over to me, he put an arm on each side of my waist! I give a jump, and hollered, as well I might:

"Hands off! I'll have you know I'm

Phoebe Ann, wife of Elder Lysander, of the Presbyterian church. I didn't come here for no hugging, my partner can attend to that —I come for singing lessons." Still that critter didn't move. He only says:

"Now try vonce!"

"Try nothing," says I. "Take your arms away this minute!"

"De Amerikaner iss zo funny," says he. "Very goot! Den you put your hands mit my zides!"

"You wicked man!" I gasped, "not only to be so shameless as to caress me at first sight, but to want me to return it!"

Here a rap come at the door, and the Professor went to open it.

I give a sigh of relief, for I was beginning to get pretty scared. I wondered if everybody got demoralized so that learned to sing! Surely this couldn't be that second man the astrologer saw, though it did seem like love at first sight.

In a minute the Professor come back in the room and says:

"De half hour iss now up. Here iss mein card. If you lessons vill take, you vill on

the card prices see, and you can come next veek dis same time."

Another lady, dressed very fine, come in the room at this time, and I really wondered if he had hugged her too, and if she had hugged him back!

Taking all in all, I didn't think my first lesson in singing was a great success. Still, I must get used to men admiring me if I'm to have so many of them at my feet later on; Lucy Jane smiles at a dozen of them to once when she goes out to a ball or concert.

I didn't say a word to any of the family about my afternoon's experience. I wanted a chance to think it over. But the next afternoon, when all the family was out, I went to the piano in the living-room, and finding that G on it, I copied just as near as I could—hand raised and all—the lesson I'd had. But the note had no sooner died down than Dominie come in the room with a bounce —I didn't know he was in the house—and cried:

"Je-*ru*salem, Aunt Phoebe, I thought someone was killing you!" And he threw himself on the floor and rolled over and over,

laughing, while he kicked his heels together. Now what would you do with a boy like that?

If you can find time to get my quilt patchwork tógether, I wish you'd send it out to me; for I calculate to make a bedquilt for Angelina and Mr. Earlham. My heart is just set on those two people coming together. It would make a real nice wedding present for them; and they be so sensible they would appreciate it.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER VIII.

Los Angeles, California,
January 5th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

On the evening of the last day of December we was all sitting in the living-room, when Hezekiah says:

"Aunt Phoebe, you'll be ready early in the morning, I suppose, for we want you to go to Pasadena with us to see the Tournament of Roses they give there every New Year's Day. We will drive and Lucy Jane and Dominie will go with us. Angelina—" and he looked at her and smiled indulgently, "has begged off so as to have her Girls' Club out here for a little treat, but as no gentlemen are to be allowed, Dominie and I feel kind of hurt. So, in opposition, we're planning a good time for ourselves."

"Why, yes," I says, "I don't want to miss nothing interesting. But I've always heard Ephraim say that a tournament was a battle. I don't suppose they fight with the roses, do

they?—Though I've heard of the War of Roses! So I suppose my conscience would be clear lending them my presence!"

"You can be easy on that point," says Hezekiah, laughing, "and I'll be responsible for the company you're in."

So the next morning, at about eight o'clock, the carriage drove up and we got in. We had a real pleasant drive, and on the way I asked how far Pasadena was from Los Angeles.

"About twelve miles," says Hezekiah, "the way we are driving."

"I suppose," says I, "that there's a nice big common near the village to which we're going, where they give the show!"

I could almost declare that Hezekiah winked to Lucy Jane, but of course I must have been mistaken. Dominie says:

"It's great, Aunt Phoebe! Some of the women don't even stop to do up their hair, they're in such a rush to get there. They just let it hang down their backs and go sailing through the street blowing a horn, so as to get all men's attention! Pa and I like to go, don't we?" And he looked at Hezekiah.

Lucy Jane hadn't said much, but now she says:

"I think it's a shame, Aunt Phoebe, the way Hezekiah and Dominie are deceiving you. The Tournament of Roses held in Pasadena is getting world-wide in fame. They have flowers of all kinds, but particularly roses, that they trim their wagons and coaches with, and people parade them through the streets in a regular procession. We will have a chance to drive around the city a little before the parade begins, and then you can see how much truth there is in what Dominie said. Pasadena is called the 'Garden Spot of the World,' and Los Angeles is almost inclined to be jealous of its extra charms over her. However, you'll soon have a chance to judge for yourself."

Arriving in Pasadena, Hezekiah says to the coachman:

"Take us down Orange Grove Avenue, John."

From this I expected to strike a path leading through an orange grove, and I thought it would be real handy having Dominie along to jump out and pick up an orange or so.

But, la, Susanna, it wasn't an orange grove at all! The street is very wide, and on each side are the most beautiful houses you ever seen or heard of or imagined. And such grounds! It looked most like a park from beginning to end. We passed one house where the door knobs and hinges was solid gold, and the man blind that had them put in; think of that!

"Now take us to the Sunken Gardens of Mr. Busch," says Hezekiah, and there we drove.

That was the most wonderful sight I ever did see. Of course the garden was down below the level of the ground we drove on, and made in terraces, going deeper and deeper. Here was fountains and all kinds of rare plants and posies. Then we drove down an avenue they called Marengo.

This looked just like the pictures I've seen of streets in Europe. The pepper trees, lining both sides of the curbing, met in an arch overhead, and you drove right through it; just like you walk under a trellis or through a summer house. The homes here was likewise beautiful. As we got near the end of that street, Dominie says:

"O, look, Aunt Phoebe, there's a monkey tree!"

I tell you, I turned quick, for of all the animals that's interesting, give me the monkey. They are so cute and saucy. I thought I should see the limbs of that tree full of them. But that boy! It was nothing but a funny-looking evergreen that they give this name to!

By this time it was drawing nigh to the hour of the parade. Hezekiah had spoke for a window for us, it seems, and so we now drove down to the business part of the place. As we was going along, we come in sight of the procession forming.

As we come nearer and nearer to it, my enthusiasm rose higher and higher. Then we begun to pass some of the wagons. There was a tally-ho, looking like it was made of one solid flower, wheels and all, and climbing up on to it was young men and women all dressed in holiday style. The men had on white suits and the girls fluffy pink dresses, hair flying and a hat the shape and color of a pink rose. Then we passed a long wagon on which was a boat, made entirely of flow-

ers, on waves that was represented by blue and white flowers, and men dressed like sailors in it. Next we come to a log cabin made of flowers, on a wagon, and in the door a Puritan woman standing. Near her was an old oaken bucket, also made of flowers, hanging over a well.

All this time I had sat forward, straining my eyes to see such wonderful things. When I see they was getting more wonderful the farther we drove, I couldn't stand it any longer. Turning to Hezekiah, I says:

"Do, Hezekiah, for goodness' sakes, let me out; and when you have got that window seat located, you can come back and get me!"

Hezekiah didn't want to do it, but Dominie, for once a comfort, now joined in, saying:

"Do, pa! and I'll stay with her. Then you can come right back here and get us!"

So Hezekiah let us out, and he drove off.

Just where we got out there was a great big shoe all made of flowers, in which a young girl was to ride, with a poke bonnet and an old-fashioned cloak—meant to represent "the old woman who lived in a shoe." The girl was just about to step in, but she was kind

of pouting and looking up to a nice-looking young man in the tally-ho, saying, with one foot already on the step:

"I just hate to ride in this. I wish I were going up there with the rest of you."

And he says, with a lot of expression in his eyes:

"I wish you were!"

Now you know my heart of old, Susanna, and I felt real sorry for that girl and young man. Dominie, too, seemed to feel the same way, and nudging me, he says:

"There's your show, Aunt Phoebe!"

I stood still a second, but there was no time to waste. So, taking hold of the girl's arm, I says:

"Just you give me that poke bonnet and cloak,"—for I see she had a pretty pink dress underneath—"and I'll be the old woman! You skip in beside your young man and have some fun, and you can have all the credit of doing your part, if there's any praise coming my way!"

She looked like she didn't know what to do for a minute, her heart was pulling so strong one way and her idea of duty t'other.

But the young man decided it by saying, just as they was going to drive off:

"Jump in, Aleen!"

Flinging her bonnet and cloak to me, she got up on the step of the tally-ho, with the aid of the young man's hand, just in time.

You know I be naturally spry, and this was no exception. In a jiffy I had on that hat and cloak and was climbing into that shoe. As long as I didn't have to drive, I was all right, and I see there was two boys sitting up in front. Just as I was almost in, we see Hezekiah and Lucy Jane coming from the opposite direction. Dominie come up behind and give me an extra push, while he says as I tumbled in:

"Go it, Aunt Phoebe, don't let them head you off! You're the stuff! We'll be waiting for you when you get back. You look just like a peach!" he called after me as we drove off.

The people, seeing him so pleased, and kind of catching on to the good act I'd done, I suppose, all set up a cheering, and clapping too. What good-natured people there are in the world!

We didn't have to go very far before we met the oncoming rig of Hezekiah's. Lucy Jane said something to Hezekiah which she seemed to be very much horrified over, and he leaned over the side of the carriage quick and looked in the wagon where I was. Then he threw back his head and laughed, while I smiled and shook my hand to him. But Lucy Jane looked like she was froze to death!

Well, the procession had set out, and Phoebe Ann was in it! Wonderful, ain't it, when you do an act of self-sacrifice, Nature puts you in the way of having a much better time than as though you had been selfish. Now it was lots more fun for me to ride around Pasadena than to sit still and get worn out just looking.

We rode down Colorado Street, where people was thick on the sidewalks, and in the windows overhead, in slow and effective style. They clapped so much I didn't know the quantity of applause to take for my share, but I bowed and smiled till I thought I'd paid them back sufficient. Right in back of me there was a wagon full of children dressed out like big red poinsettias, which

is the most beautiful big red flower, with a yellow center, I ever see. On their heads they had green hats to represent the calyx. The wagon was trimmed all in the same flower. I suppose they was to be the children of the "old woman in the shoe," so every once in a while I kept pointing to them—as we drove along—and the people seemed to take to it mightily. Behind them was about a mile of other wagons, chariots, etc., all fixed up likewise.

I now begun to study the faces of the people, seeing as I had no one to talk to. While I was looking so attentive, I thought I see a natural face on the edge of the sidewalk. Giving a second look, I was struck almost dumb to see it was Zekiel Brown of the next town to our'n.

Seeing as there was no chance of his recognizing Phoebe Ann, unless his attention was called to her, I leaned over and grasped my umbrella firmly. I wouldn't have him miss me for the world, for we Vermonters be dreadful loyal to each other wherever we meet in this wide world.

I raised the parasol, which was done up

tight, and swung it round and round my head, meanwhile shouting:

"Zekiel, Zekiel! Here's your old friend, Phoebe Ann. Come on and join the circus! It's the greatest lark I've struck since getting to California; I wouldn't have missed it for nothing. And it's a free ride, too!"

Right away, the people begun to laugh and whistle and clap.

But, speaking about Vermonters, there's a great difference in them. Some be quick to take a hint, and some ben't. Some don't know what it is to be bashful, and some can hardly look at you if they are surprised. Zekiel was one of the last in both cases. I don't doubt, if the ride had been broached to him an hour ahead of time, he'd been all waiting to grab the opportunity. But now that it had come so sudden on him, he didn't seem to have power to do anything but look with both eyes and mouth wide open. By the time he'd come to himself, of course I was out of sight. And that set me to thinking, too.

After all, it's the people who grasp every opportunity as it comes along that gets

anywhere in this world. I guess we've both known of instances where happiness has looked people plumb in the face, and, not being grasped at the right minute, has sailed out of sight never to return.

After sailing around for about two hours, we come to Tournament Park—the place to disband, and where my party was waiting for me. As I climbed down, the girl whose place I had occupied come up to me and says:

"I've had just the jolliest time in the world. Thank you so much!" And I felt fully repaid. Besides I'd seen Zekiel Brown, and Zekiel Brown had seen me; which would be great news for Wayneville.

So Lucy Jane might look annoyed as much as she wanted to. It was funny how she kept on being jealous of the attention I drew! But what else could you expect would befall a great singer!

But I mustn't fail to tell you, before I forget it, that I thought I saw Mr. Grey and that pretty girl of the lace counter in one of the windows as I drove along in the parade. Yet, as they kind of dodged back when I

come underneath them, I can't be sure. One of my maxims is, that when you can't be dead sure of a thing, you'd better say nothing, and I was willing to give even Mr. Grey the benefit of the doubt.

After dinner Hezekiah says:

"We'll go to the races, I guess, and finish the day up!"

"Dear me," I thought, "when once you get on the road to sin, how easy it is to go down hill at a break-neck speed. Here I've been drawn into dancing, witchcraft—and now the races!" However, I knew it was no use to open my lips, for we'd got in the whirl and must see it through; so I only sighed and made resolutions for the future.

When we got back to Tournament Park, which is the race grounds, it was impossible for us all to get seats in one place, and so Dominie and I sat together. Lucy Jane and Hezekiah was on another part of the Grand Stand.

Pretty soon the chariot race was called for, and two chariots with a man in each drove up to the starting-point.

Well, the chariots started side by side,

with the man's forehead in each bandaged, one in red and t'other in white.

"What a pity," says I to Dominie, "that they've both got the headache! My own head feels kind of bad."

But the excitement had begun, and I couldn't stop to think of any personal ailments.

Pretty soon I see the chariot that had the man with the red rag round his forehead, and driving the black horses, getting kind of interested. As though to show his friend that he wasn't asleep, neither, the red-haired man in the other, with the white bandage around his head, and driving the white horses, got one step ahead.

Both teams was now beginning to go faster, anyway; and, together with the horses, the people was beginning to wake up.

They was nearing the Grand Stand, where the judges was, and the leading horses of both rigs had so much pride that they each wanted to be seen first. I see the black ones was going to make their end about a neck ahead of the others, and I felt sorry for that red-haired man.

But the judges marked it down, and, after a few minutes, started them again. By this time I was beginning to lean over, and the people was shouting encouragement, first to one and then to t'other, for now the horses of both chariots come up even to the stand, after going at a mad pace around the circle, and that was marked down likewise.

Soon they was started off again on the third heat. Then the business begun in earnest, not only for the men in the chariots and the horses, but for the people watching. I'd set my heart on that red-haired man winning; I suppose because most of them around me was for the thin man and the black horses.

But the others wasn't to be outdone if they could help it. With one terrible bound, they slung up so close to the white horses that I was sure their wheels would crash, and one or both be killed. At that I shut my eyes and covered them with my hands. But they didn't. As they turned the corner, they barely balanced on one wheel.

Now each man was dead in earnest. I couldn't sit still no longer, so I just stood

up in my seat and hollered with the rest. I knew my hat was hanging down my back, and I didn't care how my hair was. I wanted Reddy to get the prize, and he got it. After I see he'd won, I just tumbled down into my seat, exhausted.

Taken all in all, it was a great thing, this Tournament of Roses and Chariot Race. I was so pleased with the whole outfit that I bought Dominie ten cents' worth of popcorn!

Going back, we passed a big building which Hezekiah told me was Occidental College, one of the best in the West. This was the college, he said, in which Mr. Earlham hoped to be Professor of Political Economy some day.

When we got home, I see Angelina had had a real nice time by the happy expression of her face; though I didn't know any special reason for it except that she had given happiness to others.

As I got ready for bed, I couldn't keep the day's experience out of my mind, nor them funny-looking mountains that lay just north of Pasadena. The scene was so romantic—

snow could be plainly seen on top of some of the mountains, and down where we was hung golden oranges beside their blossoms on the trees, and beautiful flowers was blooming all around.

As I was dropping off to sleep I heard Dominie going from his sister's room into his'n and laughing. Then I heard him say, as he shut his door:

"Sis, I'd give ten shillings if you'd been there!"

I could hear her answer:

"Dominie, you ought to be taken in hand!"

Well, I think I'd give more'n that, though I be so careful with money, for I had missed her powerful that day

My very last thoughts that night I've been telling you of was not of the flowers, but of Zekiel Brown, the red-haired man and the "old woman in the shoe," all mixed up in one image.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER IX.

Los Angeles, California,
March 5th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

I ain't naturally superstitious—you know that, Susanna—though I always do carry a lot of rusty nails in my pocket and a charm tied around my neck. So I didn't believe, though that astrologer told me the fracas between the Moon, Saturn and Jupiter would come off about the middle of January, that there was a thing to it.

You may remember that he said there would be a money loss, a disappointment, or the loss of some dear friend. You can imagine the chills running up and down my spinal column when, on the twelfth of January, I discovered I had lost ten cents. I also had a disappointment. This last was the worst, and I shall tell you about it.

I had made up my mind, on thinking it over, to part with them dollars mentioned on the card the singing teacher had given

me, in order to commence my lessons. The amount I am afraid to tell, it was so big. But, of course, if it was to bring me in big returns, both in money and good feelings, by having so much incense offered at my shrine by the aforesaid men, it was worth the sacrifice.

Human nature is certainly very peculiar, and I have been afflicted that way along with the rest of the race. Now if a Missionary Society had asked me for a half of what I was intending to pay that Dutchman for lessons, I should have looked aghast at them. And yet souls are surely more account than tickling people's ears.

Meanwhile the coin had changed hands. Herr Professor was so many dollars richer, and I was so many dollars poorer.

At my first real lesson I went with fear and trembling, for he did seem such an excitable man, and you know how calm and even I always be! Besides, that hugging had made me kind of nervous, and I didn't know how far he would go on more acquaintance!

This lesson he kind of let the breathing go a little, and didn't offer no personal contact;

but said he must place the tone. I had thought that that tone come off the side of the wall, and all you had to do was to open your mouth and take it in, but he now showed me entirely different. Tapping the top of his nose, up between his eyes, he says to me, kind of snorting through his nose to show me how:

"Me—me!"

So I tapped my nose, and says:

"Me—me!" Quite a greeting!

Then he told me how to throw my shoulders back, hold my chest up, and how to stand.

The second time I went, after I had kept blowing through my nose and singing "Me—me!" all through the house during the week—though Dominie had been a trial to me, getting right behind me and blowing the same way—I had some more samples of the "Herr's" scandalous talk. I must tell you, if you don't know it, that "nicht" means "not" in German; also that "genug" means "enough." This I learned from Angelina, who is a good German scholar. That girl knows a pile.

Well, as I went into his singing-room, where

the piano is, he walked over to the window—I suppose to turn his back to me till he let off his feelings—and raising the shade, he says:

"It iss nicht hell genug here!"

"Well," says I, horrified, "then our idea of that place differs. If it ben't hell enough here, why didn't you stay in your Dutch land, where it was? Hell ain't all you imagine, if you're so anxious for it to come. The day'll dawn when you'll wish for Heaven with more ardor than you're now wishing for hell, my friend, or my name ain't Phoebe Ann!"

Then I sighed, for what was the use? I had already lost ten minutes of my half-hour, and he hadn't understood a single thing of what I meant. So he begun his highfaluting playing and I begun blowing that "Me" through my head.

After I got home that day I couldn't help telling Angelina how that man had been swearing at me, for it had hurt my feelings.

"What did he say, aunty?" says she, looking shocked.

I most hated to tell her, for I have always been glad we set out from the start to be such friends, but finally I owned up that he said:

"It iss nicht hell genug here!"

I never see her so convulsed with laughing in my life. When she had got over it, she says:

"You poor aunty, he only said what in English would be, 'it is not light enough here,' for 'hell' in German means 'light.'"

Well, it was a relief, anyhow, that he hadn't meant what I thought he did; but why can't foreigners learn to talk our language before they set up as teachers to English scholars?

But I've only give you a single sample of the tortures of voice cultivation. You can fill in the spaces of other lessons with more of the same kind.

Along about the end of the month, after me working hard all that time, I says to that Herr Professor:

"When will I be able to give a concert?"

I believe I'd give ten dollars, as hard as it would come, if you could have seen that man open his starey eyes and run his hand

through his hair. He jumped off the piano stool, right into the air, to say:

"Mein Gott, you are crazy! You no voice haf, and never for a concert vill haf. Your voice it iss a goot von to sing de babies to schlafen—schleep, do you call him?—venn you vill visper. But for a concert—" and here he buried his face in his hands—"mein Gott!" and he groaned.

I needn't tell you this was too much for me.

"Then you hand my money right back," says I, "and, moreover, I'll sue you for false pretences!" And I meant what I said.

"You mean you a lawyer vill get?" says he, and I saw he was frightened; for some Germans are very much afraid of the law.

"Yes," says I, impressive, "and you will have to go to court!"

"Den," says the Dutchman, "I vill haf de judger call on you for von solo, so that the court can you perform hear, and he vill me sent home mit a clap of von approval on mine back for de judgment dat I gif you."

Did you ever hear such impudence in your life? But he had the money, and I was powerless.

Of course I won't deny that this was a great disappointment to me, but when I got home I bolted my door and set down and thought it over. What that astrologer had said now popped into my mind for the first time. It give me kind of a creepy feeling when I remembered it. And yet—think of the Heavens themselves being disturbed over my voice! Wasn't there something in it, after all? It was clear that Jupiter had encouraged me, and Saturn, to get even, had put it into the head of the "Herr" to discourage me. Immediately I thought this, I made up my mind to help Jupiter out, and win anyway. Some day that same Professor may be on his knees to me!

In consequence, I am still studying singing, and Dominie is still urging me on to some public performance. Angelina says very little, only that she is glad I have found something to interest me, and she hopes I will be successful. Lucy Jane kind of sniffs up her nose, still jealous. And Hezekiah laughs and says he supposes the "Herr" Professor will spend the money as sensible as anyone else would.

Yet so far from disliking the Professor, I really begin to enjoy my lessons. I guess I understand him better. I still get to laughing at his jargon and misunderstand his words; but he can't understand me, neither.

I really think I have learned more since this occurrence than before, too. P'rhaps I did have a little conceit, and conceit keeps you from doing anything well. The Professor, in his turn, thinks my voice is gaining. I am bound to sing solos in our church when I get home, if I die in doing it!

Don't think because I've said nothing so far in this letter about Mr. Earlham that I've forgot him, nor Mr. Grey neither. Indeed I ain't. And things have been working dreadful curious.

Going past the housekeeper's room one evening, when the rest of the family was out, I heard Tom—that's the butler's name—talking pretty loud. So I stopped to listen. I knew by the thick tone of Tom's voice that he'd been imbibing pretty heavy. I heard him say:

"Yes, Mr. Grey — hic — now, he's all

right. A feller—hic—sees the sight of his money—hic—once in a while. But Mr. Earlham, there—hic—he never gives nothing to a feller—hic—but a smile and a good word."

"And sure," was the answer, "that's enough for any honest man. For my part, I always suspicions anyone that throws their money around, and them that takes it, too; for more often'n not it's only hush money! You know yourself Mr. Grey ain't fit to wipe Mr. Earlham's shoes, if he has got money!"

I don't know what answer Tom made, for I had heard enough to set me to thinking. Now why should Mr. Grey be so careful to keep Tom his friend? I kept asking myself.

All this information I stored carefully away in my mind for future use.

But to come to more congenial subjects. Lucy Jane, about the middle of February, planned to give a dinner to her friends. At this dinner was to be both Mr. Grey and Mr. Earlham. Though I see Lucy Jane didn't want the last, she had too much sentiment towards her daughter to affront her. Angelina annoyed her dreadful by not joining in with her kind of a life and liking for different

things. But in spite of herself she couldn't help seeing her daughter had some ideals she was making for that wasn't to be despised, and she hadn't got the courage to face Angelina's judgment. Besides, if Mr. Earlham really did get his professorship, it would be convenient to have him as a friend of the family, to help set off occasions. But as a husband for Angelina—never!

Days before the dinner there was dressmakers—for fashionable people don't wear dresses but two or three times before they dispose of them—and decorators. The house had to be gone all over thoroughly, though to me it looked spotless, and cards sent and received. Lucy Jane was in her element, but Angelina was bored to death.

Well, the time for the dinner come. Decorators arrived, gowns was delivered, and beautiful presents as prizes for cards was set in order. A special caterer come to help out the cook and two more waitresses was added for the occasion. So much more money for Hezekiah to pay, I grimly thought. Such extravagance seemed dreadful to me.

The guests come in due time—in bevys, in

couples, and one by one. They was all laughing and chattering like a lot of magpies, and of course all was dressed elegant. I had on my best bib and tucker, too.

When we set down to the dinner, I see that Lucy Jane placed the cards so that Mr. Grey would have to take care of Angelina. At this I wasn't pleased, but I was tickled to think she had give me Mr. Earlham. I didn't know then that he had asked Lucy Jane himself to do it—for he knew she would give Mr. Grey to Angelina—but when I did find it out, I was all the more pleased. I suppose he felt I was the only one in the family that was really for him. It's always so, you know, you can't help but be drawn to the one that's got real sympathy with you!

We set just across the way from Angelina and her partner. Then things happened at which I was clean surprised! Mr. Earlham acted just the same as he always had, when I had been around, looking and looking at my niece with his heart in his eyes. But Angelina, though she glanced at us occasionally, seemed entirely took up with Mr. Grey! She just let the full artillery of her fun and

beauty fly straight at him; and he was almost speechless from admiration and surprise. I don't think she'd ever paid him one-tenth of the attention before that she give him tonight. That was surprise number one. I could see that her mother was mightily pleased, and Hezekiah acted so, too. The mothers of some of the other girls looked on in green envy—for he was rich.

Surprise number two followed before we'd got half through the dinner. For a minute Angelina and Mr. Grey was quiet, and during this minute Mr. Earlham was talking more'n earnest to me about his plans of work for the future—for I had drawn him out—and he was saying:

"Indeed I hope some time to win a professorship in a foreign university. I would select a German one if I could. I think, too, I should enjoy the life over there."

"No doubt you would," says I, "for the more you know of German nature the better you find it is—" And I was going on to talk further, when I happened to glance across the table.

I see Angelina's eyes fixed full on Mr.

Earlham, and she was as pale as death. Likewise I see her hands tremble as though she had the ague. But Mr. Earlham was thinking so hard of other things he didn't happen to look in the same direction as I had; and when he did, Angelina was laughing and talking, it seemed to me, more gay'n ever. There had been only a second's peep into her heart before she had pulled the curtain down over it.

"Now what," thought I, "is the matter with that girl?"—and I fell to studying.

I see, too, that Mr. Earlham seemed kind of hurt by her light manner and her attention to Mr. Grey. I couldn't eat much more through the dinner because my companion's voice had got sort of a sad sound in it, like his heart was aching, which he couldn't shake off.

It was plainly time for Phoebe Ann to help Jupiter out. But how was I to do it?

I set quiet for quite a space figuring. Then I hit it. She was acting that way from a sense of duty. I suppose Lucy Jane had been after her again. And there was another thought way down deep in my mind,

too. Angelina, though I give her credit for doing it unconsciously, was trying to rouse some jealousy in Mr. Earlham so he'd love her more'n ever when she did turn to him again.

Then I begun to plan. Cards, music or people was nothing to me now—only to straighten out that thread that was getting in a snarl between the two people I was most interested in.

Finally a thought struck me. I begun to cast around for my scene of action. Hezekiah had a den, quite secluded from the other rooms, and which opened onto a veranda. This led down into part of the grounds that was like a park, through a rose walk. There was benches there, and the moon not being very bright, one couldn't be seen easily. This was my vantage ground.

When every one was talking busily, I slipped out of the room. I went straight to the den, almost unseen. On the way I nudged one of the maids to come with me. She followed, and when I got in the room, I says:

"Nancy, you wait a chance, by the door

of the drawing-room, and when you see Miss Angelina, you tell her that her aunt's in a very bad way, and must see her and Mr. Grey and Mr. Earlham to once. But she mustn't let anyone else know anything at all about it!"

"All right, mum," says the girl, and I sat down and waited till I should hear them coming.

Now you know, Susanna, that I had a half-brother that went to the war by the name of Grey; and though I knew he hadn't left no sons, I was going to make out this was one.

I didn't have to wait long before I heard all three coming. Angelina and Mr. Earlham both looked scared, but Mr. Grey acted indifferent.

As they come into the room, I had my kerchief up to my eyes, as though I was overcome by some great feeling.

"O, my dear, my dear!" says I, standing up and throwing both arms around Mr. Grey's neck. "To think I should have found you at last!"

"The deuce you have," says he; "well,

then, lose me again as quick as you can!" And he tried to shake off my embrace. But I clung.

Turning to Angelina and Mr. Earlham, who was looking on amazed, I says, taking out my watch:

"I have a great revelation to make to this young man which will enhance his fortune. As it's proper for his ears alone to hear it, won't you two go out in the rose garden for half an hour, while I make it?"

Thereupon I give Mr. Earlham a look which I'm just sure he understood by the look he sent back, and they stepped out on the balcony.

If I hadn't spoke about the fortune to Mr. Grey, I don't believe he'd stayed under any conditions. As it was, he looked kind of scared at me and ground his teeth at the sight of the other two together.

I went over and locked the door and took the key out. Then I set down. I took up twenty minutes of the time telling Mr. Grey my family history, though he fidgeted about all the while. The other five minutes I tried to prove he was my rightful nephew, and that

my fortune should succeed to him. But of course I wasn't successful, as his father had never been to the war, nor his grandfather neither.

At the end of the half-hour the other two come back, and I was repaid. Angelina was quiet and like herself, and Mr. Earlham's face and voice was both happy.

"It was a mistake, after all," I says, as they come in, "and I'm sorry to have put you to the inconvenience of being out in the night, but then, mistakes will happen, you know, and I was so glad to think there was a chance of finding another relation!"

I could have declared that Mr. Grey said under his breath, as he walked off with Angelina:

"I wouldn't own such an old loon!"—But la, I didn't care.

I never seen any man so grateful as Mr. Earlham. He seemed all made over again. The course of true love never will run smooth, but sometimes it's made a good deal harder than it needs to be.

You have got a long letter this time, so I'll just stop right off.

I suppose you'll have a great time on St. Patrick's Day. Be careful Ephraim don't take cold watching the little parade the Weed Patch of our town always gets up.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER X.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,
May 11th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

I received that patchwork you sent me. When I began putting it together with the belief that it was a bed-quilt for Angelina and Mr. Earlham, my fingers fairly flew and the colors joined beautiful. But when I got disheartened over the way things was going, and considered the possible relation between my niece and Mr. Grey, my fingers most refused to move, and the colors went together terrible discordant.

Getting bold one day, when I see Hezekiah was alone in the library, I sat down beside him for a little talk.

"Hezekiah," says I, "I don't want to ask no questions, like I was poking into your affairs, but tell me, what have you got against Mr. Earlham?"

"Why, Aunt Phœbe," says he, surprised, "I ain't got a thing against him. His ideals

are very high, and I admire his manliness. If I didn't feel he was an appropriate man for my daughter to have as a friend, I certainly should not allow him the house."

"But what have you against him as a son-in-law?" I persisted.

"Now that's another matter," says he, moving a little uneasily and waving the subject off with one hand. "Angelina has never had anything but abundance and luxury all her life. That she has learned to cook and bake, sweep and dust, make beds and arrange the house linen, is entirely her own doing. But as to any kind of economy or hardship, Angelina is entirely unfit. The idea of struggling along with a man you think you like well enough to live with, is all very pretty in prospect. But, believe me, Aunt Phoebe—" and he put his hand down hard to emphasize it, "it's *all* in prospect! For the first ten years of my own married life I didn't know which way to turn sometimes to get bread enough for our table and our rent paid. I did everything I could lay my hand to that was honest. I tell you, poverty is a hard, merciless, grinding taskmaster!"

"And did Lucy Jane forsake you then, and blame you for not providing for her better?"

"No, indeed," says he, with his face brightening, "she did everything in her power to encourage me, and it's really owing to that fact that I'm where I am today."

"Then," says I, driving the nail in, "you think women's hearts of different generations are entirely different! But any true woman will stand shoulder to shoulder with the man she's give her hand and heart to, and the more they have to struggle the nearer they grow together. You know yourself, Hezekiah, that there are more happy poor people than happy rich people. I can't help but think that Angelina's got as good a heart as the average!" I concluded kind of sarcastic.

I see this kind of touched Hezekiah's fatherly pride, and he says:

"Angelina's got a better heart than the average, but I don't want her to suffer what her mother had to. Of course if she married a poor man, I could see that they were above want. But a man like Mr. Earlham would never accept help from his wife or her people; he is too intensely independent. But Mr.

Grey receives an income of forty thousand dollars a year without touching the principal, which does not go to him but to his children. With less she might do, but with such a sum it would be impossible for her ever to suffer want for anything."

"Only the greatest want of all," I says earnestly, "the want of congenial love, congenial tastes, and congenial habits."

"Aunt Phoebe," says Hezekiah, "you surprise me. I am sure Angelina isn't suffering for anything in the world! If I thought she was, I wouldn't sleep nights till she was given it. I am sure she ought to find all the love she needs in Mr. Grey, for he seems very fond of her. As to congeniality, that is very pretty poetry, but it's like most other poetry—it wears out long before the prose of hard, genuine dollars and cents."

I made up my mind after we'd finished our talk and I was set down in my own room, that the sentiment in Hezekiah's nature had been seared over by them hard experiences he'd gone through. Yet underneath was a warm, loving father-heart. On this I relied for some of the success I was going to try

to gain for them two people I'd set out to make happy.

A third picture had been give me by Angelina herself, that frightened me even more than the union with Mr. Grey. The view she threw on the canvas was a life of single blessedness.

Now of all the lives in the world, to me the life of an old maid is the most terrifying. Think of having no partner to go to, that understands you, to pour your troubles and perplexities out to! I know some single women who claim to look with scorn on us married women as being bound down with chains and padlocked to the attentions and demands of one man. But I never believe them, little less give them credit for not wanting the same kind of ownership. The chains of married life are silken cords with a love knot at the end when each believes in and tries to please the other. Likewise, imagine a house always silent, without the patter of children's footsteps; and no soft, warm little arms and lips, nor bright trusting eyes about one. For it's this that makes a home ideal. And it's this last

thought that brings me to the scene of revelation—which was the Children's Home that Angelina took me to.

My niece had been appointed one of the directors of the home, seeing as Lucy Jane was too busy with her functions to give them any attention. Angelina took me all through the home and seemed to take to them children as naturally as though they was her own. The children knew it, too. Trust anybody a child trusts. As Angelina went in one of the clean white-furnitured little rooms and looked around, she says, turning to me with bright eyes:

"Do you know, Aunt Phoebe, I've lately made up my mind that, of all things, I'd like to be the matron of a home like this. If father and mother would only consent to my living a single life, I'm sure I would be much happier in this work than in anything else!"

But I didn't enthuse. I was of the opinion she'd better have a Children's Home of her own, with Mr. Earlham as head director. As it would have been hardly the thing to have uttered such thoughts out loud, I only smiled and said nothing.

Within the past two months, too, Angelina and I have visited some of the beaches of the Pacific Ocean. Los Angeles is only about thirty miles from the ocean, so we get good fresh breezes here most of the time.

Long Beach, being the largest, was the first we went to. At this beach they had a brass band which took me greatly. The head of the band was a fine-looking, dark man with a shock of curly hair over his forehead. He come out, after all the rest of the band was sitting down, in a white suit.

Then he got up in front of the others, and begun to wave a stick in the air. "Trying to frighten them," thinks I. But, as though in defiance of him, they struck up their music.

Then he got madder and madder. He began to fly that stick around in all directions. And they got madder, too. They fairly crashed them notes. Seeing this didn't work, he began to lean over to one side, and made the stick go straight up and down, while with the empty hand he made a regular "hellu" around his mouth and shouted something to them through it. I suppose

he told them he'd fling that stick at them if they didn't hush up.

This seemed to have the desired effect, for a minute, anyway. Only two or three of them wouldn't be bossed so, and they kept hooting through their piccolos and playing on their flutes. I really expected to see the leader step over the heads of the others and give them a good shaking up, but he didn't. But I could see this riled him considerable; and he begun skipping around, swinging his body and his head, and making both hands fly to those men.

I suppose the success them obstinate men had had now made the rest of them go on a strike, too, from his authority. With a perfect devil-may-care bang, they all set up on their several instruments, and, getting more and more bold, they went it harder and harder, faster and faster. The man danced around like a lunatic; but the men only looked mad and as though they was going to have their way or die. And they did. All together, they give one terrible, deafening crash, and stopped dead silent!

I expected now that that man would pay

them up well with that stick, for their sauce. But what do you think—the old loon was that crazy that he dropped into a chair, mopping his forehead—just at the very minute that they give him a chance to have his say!

The next beach we visited was Catalina Island. This was the most interesting one of all to me.

We had to ride quite a piece on the Pacific Ocean to get there, and though it was middling rough, it was worth the trip. One of the greatest, I suppose I ought to say the greatest, features of the place is the gardens they hold up to view.

I was used to seeing beautiful gardens by this time, gardens such as only California can produce. But they had all been above ground. But I hadn't seen any *under* water before. The minute the subject was broached to me, about going out in the water to look at them, I knew where Mr. Busch had got his idea for them sunken gardens. But even Mr. Busch couldn't rival nature.

So Angelina and I joined the company of the intended onlookers and set off for the boats to see them in.

I was just about to step in one, when I quickly drew back and pulled Angelina with me by the arm.

"O Massy!" I gasped, and I knew I turned pale by my feelings, "how near we come to being drowned! Them boats ain't got any bottoms!"

"The boats have glass bottoms, aunty, so hurry along!" says Angelina, and she pulled me by main force with her.

I tell you I got in with fear and trembling. And I guess there was others that felt the same way. Then everybody began leaning over and looking down into the water, and for a minute I forgot to be nervous. For the sight was the most wonderful I ever see. There was plants growing, and what looked like trees, and ferns, and mosses, with lots of seashells, under the water. The sky looked, through that glass, as though there was a sky at the other end of the new world; and the fishes and little sea animals playing around in it was a sight to behold.

However, I was really glad when we got to the shore, and more glad when we got home safe.

But there's still other kind of news to come. About three weeks ago, I noticed Hezekiah come downstairs in the morning looking dreadfully tired and haggard, and that Lucy Jane appeared worried. It seemed that his nerves had kind of forsaken their post of duty and went scampering around through his body, playing tag with each other. In other words, he just couldn't sleep, no matter what was done for him. Well, you know you can get tired out in a good cause even, sometimes, and he was getting real exhausted in this foolish one by the time a week had gone by. So to the doctor he went.

He didn't tell us what advice he had received, first, for he had so much business on hand he didn't seem to have time to think of himself. But one day, not very long after this visit, he come in at lunch time and says, looking round on all of us:

"What do you all say to a picnic in the woods for a couple of months?"

Of course each one had questions to ask at once, which took time to answer. The upshot of it was that the doctor had said that the only thing that could make them

nerves stop their playing tag and go back on duty was to give them such a change that they'd take their look-outs from mere surprise. That a driving trip, himself acting as coachman, would be the very best thing he could possibly do; and this he proposed to the family.

So all our spare moments, for two or three days, we spent in talking it over. I see Angelina take her father to one side one day and talk real earnest to him for quite a while, about something that he didn't seem to agree to. But she kept right on talking till he appeared to change his mind, though I see he felt kind of bad about it. The rest of us soon learned what it was.

Angelina had been taking painting lessons on china for quite a spell, and she did some fine work, too. But now one of the biggest china decorators of the country was coming to Los Angeles to give lessons for three months. At the same time he took a vacation, he was intending to make his hotel bills. I could see through that.

With this teacher Angelina had planned to study; in fact, had set her heart on it. And

this teacher was going to be there just the time the rest of us was going on the trip. Likewise, though this I found out after, when talking to Angelina about it, she had planned some special pleasures for her club for the summer and also some outings for her Children's Home, which she had said she would be responsible for. I couldn't deny it was just like her—covering up her real designs by pretending a selfish excuse; but I felt bad at the idea of parting with her, anyway. The only consolation I had was that she would be near Mr. Earlham, and you'll soon see how this had to be knocked in the head.

I believe that Lucy Jane understood her daughter so little as to believe this last was the only reason she was so set on staying home. So she studied how to hinder their being together; and she hit it. And this was the way:

One afternoon I was sitting in my room, making that bed-quilt, and Hezekiah was with Lucy Jane in her room. I couldn't help hearing what Lucy Jane said to her husband, though I really did try not to.

"No, Hezekiah," she says, "I am not will-

ing to leave Angelina in this city without me, if Mr. Earlham stays here. That Angelina is going to have a chaperon in her Cousin Martha, that's as old as I am, is no reason I should run any risk. You know all girls are impressionable, and he's bound to talk to her on the very things she likes best; though I'm sure he's just cunning, and figures out what'll please her and not alone what interests him. He knows she will have a good dowry when she marries, and he is planning to get hold of it!"

"But, my dear," I heard Hezekiah say, "how can we help it? We don't own the city, you know, and it is absurd to doubt Angelina. We both know her too well for that. I can't believe what you say about Mr. Earlham, for he seems too manly to me to feign anything. But perhaps, being a woman, you can see farther than I can. Woman's intuition is apt to go much farther than man's judgment. What would you suggest?"

"Just this—" and Lucy Jane unconsciously dropped her voice a little—"send him to Europe!"

"To Europe!" I heard Hezekiah exclaim, "why, how can I do that?"

"Easy enough," and now Lucy Jane's voice was coaxing. "You know he's working hard for the professorship in political economy, and I've heard him say it is his pet desire to study in Germany. Tell him you have a few hundred dollars lying idle, and if he'll only take it and go and study over there this summer, and at the same time attend to some business for you, he can pay you interest on the money later, if he wishes to. In this way he won't feel it's an obligation or a debt."

"Capital!" said Hezekiah, "and I'm pretty sure he'll do it, for he will get to his end all the quicker. And, at the same time, I'll feel I'm helping along a young man that is ambitious."

"Meanwhile," concluded Lucy Jane, "Mr. Grey will have Angelina all to himself, and if he don't win her over in that length of time, I'm mistaken. You can rest assured he'll take no vacation till we get back, when he knows Angelina is going to stay in the city."

The patchwork quilt tumbled on the floor, and I sat helpless above it. What if their plans should succeed, and Mr. Grey really work on that girl's feelings with no Aunt Phoebe around to hold up Mr. Earlham to view?

And their plans did. Hezekiah come home real pleased with his interview with Mr. Earlham at the college, which he soon made known to us. Coming in the living-room sudden the next evening, where we was all sitting by the wood fire, he says to Angelina:

"Well, your friend, Mr. Earlham, is going to sail for Europe in six weeks!"

Angelina was bending over Dominie, who was sitting on a stool in front of her, with his algebra on his knees. She had just been pointing out a mistake to him and helping him to correct it. It's wonderful what self-possession that girl has! She looked up to her father with steady eyes, but her face turned white. I could see, too, her hands clench in her lap, yet in a quiet voice she only said:

"To remain there?"

"O, no," says Hezekiah, who was now looking at Lucy Jane, "only for a matter of three or four months. But you're a great girl," says he, pinching her cheek, "you don't seem to mind whether your friends go or stay!"

It is certainly very peculiar that neither one of her parents seem to understand Angelina. For my part, as soon as I could catch her eye, when the rest wasn't looking, I sent my sympathy to her. And it was funny, but as soon as she see that, the tears come in her eyes. She controlled them in a minute, though, and pretty soon she went up to her room.

My heart went up with her, and I followed with my body soon after. But I didn't go near her. There are times when the most affectionate sympathy is an intrusion.

I had no sooner reached my room, than I heard the bell ring.

"There," I thought, "I just know that's the telegram I've been expecting so long, for all the bad things are coming together!"

So, going to the first landing, I called down to Tom:

"Just bring it right up here, Tom; I've been expecting it all along!"

I heard Mr. Grey's voice say, laughing, while I was sure I heard the chink of money:

"Take it up, Tom."

I couldn't help but think, indignant, that that was just like his heartlessness—laughing at a telegram when he didn't know what news it contained.

So, bounding up, two steps at a time, come, not Tom with a telegram, but a great big black dog! He had the ugliest face I ever seen.

Now of all the things I'm afeared of, a dog takes the lead. So, I just picked up my skirt in front and went up that little flight between the first landing and the upper hall three steps at a time. But the dog was quick too. I run in my room, knocking over a chair as I went, and tried to shut the door, but he got in just as I got it most to.

None of the furniture was moved up close to the wall, so I had just so much lee room around each article, and the dog saw it in the same light. Round and round I raced, and the dog, thinking I was playing tag with

him, was close on my heels at every step. To vary it a little, I jumped over a chair or two, but the dog jumped also.

To tell the truth, I was most tuckered out, and I wondered why Angelina or somebody didn't come, when I heard Tom's voice in the hall. I could hear he had been laughing, and now I heard Mr. Grey chuckle too. Then, as I took a last circuit around by the door, I heard Tom say to Angelina, who had called through her door:

"It's only your aunt, Miss, playing tag with Dominie!"

"Angelina," I shouted, as I tried another home run, "a dog's after me; call your pa!"

I'll never tell you for sure, though in my mind I'm certain Mr. Grey give a low whistle to the dog, but just then that animal put his tail between his legs and scooted downstairs and outdoors.

When the excitement was all over, Hezekiah come up to the door and says:

"Aunt Phoebe, now that you and Angelina have had your little play out, won't you come down and see Mr. Grey, who has just arrived?"

"Play, is it?" says I, to Hezekiah, "then I hope never to have another. I'm just about dead with that dog racing after me, and I suppose Angelina is asleep by this time." For I knew she wasn't in any condition to be seen, least of all by Mr. Grey.

"Well, I guess," says Hezekiah, laughing, "that you've been having a nightmare then, for we certainly heard you playing tag up here."

But I was too exhausted to make any time over it, and I heard Angelina tell her pa, through the door, that she had a sick headache and would have to be excused. But I knew that it was a sick heartache and the head was only in sympathy with it.

I suppose the snow is still on with you. With us it's all fresh and green, roses blooming and palms waving.

I think it would be very easy to contract the habit of expecting the sun to shine all the time, as it does here. I really feel disappointed when a day of fog appears.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XI.

Los Angeles, California,
June 15th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

I must write you another letter before we start on our trip. We go two weeks from today.

I watched over Angelina constant—out of the side of my eye. She began to have a listless air, like she didn't care much, down deep in her heart, for anything any more; and she begun to slack off in her eating.

Dominie really liked Mr. Earlham down deep in his nature, but, boy-like, wouldn't let it be seen for nothing. But he begun to cast around in his mind what he could give him as a parting gift. He made up his mind, finally, that he would give him a new jack-knife. But this wasn't all. He stole into Angelina's room one day, when she was out, and took one of the pictures of herself out of her photograph case. He was just doing them up together, preparing a string to wrap

round them, when I chanced in his room.

"Not to home," says he, promptly, as I opened the door; and I could see that he was trying to hide something. But, in a minute, seeing that I had caught him, he said: "Well, come on. You're a brick, anyhow; you wouldn't peach on a fellow, and I know you're in on the game!"

"What's doing, Dominie?" I asked.

"O, nothing," says he, offhand, "only a present for the 'Earl.' As I thought a 'ham' might spoil before he reached his destination, I've give him a knife to cut one with when he gets there, and Sis's picture to gaze on when he wants to look at 'the girl he left behind him.'"

In my heart I was so tickled I didn't know what to do. Wasn't that a cute thing of the boy? But I only said:

"Do, Dominie, be sure to put a penny in with it. For I've always heard, if you give a present with sharp edges to it, it'll break friendship unless you give a cent along with it." Still, I ain't a mite superstitious.

But there was no drones in our hive all this time. We was all busy. Mr. Earlham

was settling up his work at the college and preparing for his trip; Hezekiah was putting his business in shape to leave it; Lucy Jane was preparing the affairs of her house and arranging with the cousin to stay with Angelina; Dominie was working for his examinations; and I was looking over my duds to see if they was all right for our picnic in the woods.

It seemed to me Angelina was working harder'n ever, just throwing herself body and soul in her books and her work. And it was telling on her too—even Hezekiah see that.

He said to her one morning at the breakfast table:

"You're looking kind of pale, Angie"—that was his favorite name for her—"what's the matter?"

She smiled and says:

"O, nothing in the world, father. It's getting spring, you know."

Isn't that often the way with people living in the same house—living one life on the outside and another on the inside? It seems to me like ships passing within hailing distance of each other and masking their colors.

In the order of nature, the evening come for Mr. Earlham to make his last visit to the house to bid us good-bye. He was to sail for Germany by the way of New York, starting the next day after. Down in my heart I wished it was all over; I do hate parting from anyone so. For the older we grow the more necessary the presence of our friends seems to us.

But, like all affairs of this world, good and bad, the moment arrived. From the very time that Hezekiah had made plans for Mr. Earlham to go to Europe up to date, my niece had never been left alone with him a minute. That was part of the campaign, I suppose, that Lucy Jane had set out on. So how could he know that Angelina felt so bad about his going?

When Mr. Earlham come in the living-room, one by one the whole family come in also. Though everyone tried to throw it off, underneath there was a sad feeling. Yet Angelina showed it less than anyone else. She laughed and asked questions, and give saucy suggestions. Then she advised him to hear all the music he could, and if he failed to be

successful in his study, to come back and set up for a music teacher with the latest German methods. She promised him that she would do all she could to send the young ladies of her acquaintance to him! In fact, the evening passed off a good deal better than I thought it would.

The hardest moment was when he really said good-bye. I could see he was struggling for mastery of some feeling, and when he come to Angelina, I could see that he wasn't able to speak. He held her little hand in his strong one for a full minute, and just looked right in her eyes. It seemed as if he wanted to impress her face so on his mind that he couldn't lose sight of it a second while he was gone. And she couldn't speak, either. She looked in his eyes, and I could almost see that lump in her throat. Then her eyes dropped, and that seemed to break the spell.

I was standing next to Dominie. I give him a nudge and says, low:

"Have you got that package?"

"Yep," he says, low too, "all stuffed in his overcoat pocket in the hall."

When it come my turn to say good-bye to

him, which was after Angelina, I says, shaking his hand real hearty:

"Now you be sure to write to us!"—

I see him look earnest at Angelina as though to ask her if she would like to have him, but I answered for her,

"We all want to hear from you."

The others, especially Lucy Jane, give a faint approval, seeing as it would look better to do so. At last Mr. Earlham said he would certainly do so, and I thought he looked real pleased.

Before many minutes he was gone, and Angelina just wilted. I could see it, though no one else seemed to. It wasn't a bit strange to me that the next day she was in bed with a fever and her eyes unusually bright. But the doctor said she'd caught a very severe cold and must lay there for a few days—and she didn't seem to care.

Although Angelina was confined to her room for two or three days, she wouldn't hear to no one making any fuss over her. So Lucy Jane kind of took me under her wing, seeing as how miserable Angelina was.

If she suspected the cause—and being a

woman, how could she help it?—she didn't relent a bit. She seemed so relieved to think she'd got rid of such an incubus that she was willing to do anything to be obliging, even to taking charge of me.

So the next day Lucy Jane invited me to go down to the shopping district with her, as she had some purchases to make. Having nothing else to do, I went.

I wish, Susanna, you could have been with us! I am sure she spent enough that afternoon to keep us both in dry groceries for a whole year. As we was starting for the door, after looking over a good part of her husband's store—and I tell you, *now* them floorwalkers and girls was all respect to me—I saw Mr. Grey's back ahead of us just going out also. I hoped, in my soul, that now she would find him out!

"Seems to me," says Lucy Jane, "that that looks like Mr. Grey ahead of us!"

"Quite likely," says I, coolly, "he seems to be fond of this store, specially the lace counter!" And I couldn't help my voice being kind of sarcastic.

I didn't have much to say on the way

home. I was figuring on the foolishness of the female portion of the human race, and wondering how Hezekiah had ever got ahead in money matters.

Give my love to everyone, and listen well to see if the quality of Lyddy Skinner's voice is improving or going backwards.

The next two weeks will pass very fast, and then I shall see more of Southern California. But wherever I roam, be sure that I shall always be

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XII.

SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA,
July 2nd, 19—

My dear Susanna:

Yesterday we started on our trip and I feel devoutly to say "Thus far the Lord hath safely brought us on."

But I suppose you will want to know about our leaving home.

I know we all felt badly to leave Angelina behind us; but she was bright and helpful up to the last minute. However she feels herself, she is bound no one else shall suffer as a consequence. Her philosophy is that everyone has just about all they can bear up under themselves, and every complaint you make to another is only loading on to their shoulders what don't belong there.

But I relied a whole lot upon them letters from Mr. Earlham to do the work. Of course I expected him to direct them to Angelina.

The night before we started, Mr. Grey come to the house to bid us good-bye. I heard the

door open before anyone else did; I also heard Mr. Grey and Tom talking earnest, and the chink of money passing hands. I'll never be convinced that I didn't hear the word "letter" pass between them, too. But of course what was being said, or what that had to do with our going away, I couldn't tell. It was a fact, anyway, that Mr. Grey had been in the house three or four minutes before he was announced.

But to go on with our trip. Hezekiah bought two fine strong horses, which met the approval of all concerned. I joined with Dominie when he brimmed over with enthusiasm as they was driven into the yard. To me Hezekiah left the naming of them; so, being unable to entirely quench that natural prompting of the Scotch blood which is coursing through my veins, though quite a space back, I give them the titles of Laddie and Lassie. And they go shoulder to shoulder, just as two Scotch horses should.

The carriage, bought also for the occasion, was a two-seated one with plenty of room under the seats to pack away our luggage; for we had decided to do with as little as

possible, and not be bothered with trunks to carry around.

When we was all ready them two horses started off fine. Of course they felt pretty full of life, but I see Hezekiah was a good horseman, so I didn't worry.

I was powerful glad my nephew was going along. I hoped it would be one big holiday for him up to the day we got back, for he deserved it. Though he had sent Mr. Earlham off to Europe, I knew he would never have thought of such a thing except for Lucy Jane. So I didn't hold it against him. And suppose, after all, it did come out for the best? Some of the things that look awful dark and misshapen in life turn out to be bright and perfect blessings! Surely every cloud has a silver or even golden lining to it if we only look for it.

I believe I told you a couple of letters back, that we didn't have no objective point —no Land of Promise, like—to which we were set out. But our plans changed some before we started. Hezekiah come to the conclusion that he'd like to have a cottage by the sea, at some point where when he

got tired driving he could return and rest. So he set out to find a central point with lots of interesting drives around it. Coronado Beach was the place he settled on.

It didn't take very long to get to the city limits of Los Angeles, and then we headed towards Whittier. Our notion wasn't to make short cuts to our destination, but to see all that we could and live out of doors.

In course of time Whittier hove in sight.

We drove all around the town and thought it was a real pretty place.

Leaving there, we struck off on a real pretty road that led towards Orange. This road we found to be right, though Lucy Jane wasn't convinced so at the time.

We presently come to a flock of sheep, with a dog and shepherd, camping beside a river.

This leads me to tell you something of the rivers of California, for Hezekiah says they're mostly alike.

In winter, during the rainy season, which lasts sometimes for a month—almost every day sending down its quota from the skies—the rivers are full and almost running over.

But let the rain stop and the hot sun shine for a few days, and it takes up the water so quick—what don't soak in the ground—that soon the rivers are nothing but dry pieces of sandy land. And yet all depends upon the water of this rainy season for the year's supply.

It was the dry kind of a river that the poor sheep stopped by. All they could do, to remind them that water had once flowed in its rightful channel, was to gaze on the sand and lie under the shady trees. But most of the time the water doesn't stay in the rivers in California—down South. The ground just gulps it in when it has a chance. This it does to such an extent that the trees stay green and beautiful all the year, their roots absorbing such a quantity of water. Of course they are specially fine right after the rain.

This applies to the big trees. The little ones, like the fruit trees, have to be irrigated to yield returns for the work of taking care of them. But if the orange trees never yielded anything but the blossoms, it would pay to have 'em irrigated. These smell beau-

tiful, and make all the air perfumed, as though a big bottle of cologne had been broke and its contents give the passing breezes.

Another peculiar thing is that orange trees will have blossoms, green and ripe fruit on them at the same time. So, though the water don't stay on top of the ground, it does great work in filling up the reservoirs and watering the roots of such trees as the live oak.

This live oak tree, by the way, is set great store by in California. It's quite different than our oak tree back East, but makes a good shade, having wide-spreading branches. The leaves look to me kind of dry, being of a reddish green color, but it's "like a rock in a weary land" on a hot day when shade trees ain't any too plentiful.

Seeing the sheep made me kind of home-sick. The love of home seems to be implanted so deep down in our nature that anything upon which we're used to gaze in that spot makes us want to return to it.

Yet nature soon took my mind off this aspect of the case by making a call of hunger.

I hadn't ate a picnic lunch since I was on the train. So of course my mind naturally

turned back to it, and my meal with the Mormon!

Hezekiah unhitched his horses from the wagon and tied them to a couple of live oak trees not far from us, and fed them grain. They was our only means of locomotion, and it behooved us to see that they was kept in good repair.

I never realized before how hungry the open air makes one, and I could see why the doctor had advised Hezekiah's living out in it for a spell. We all ate pretty hearty, but Dominie the heartiest of all. Trust a boy, any time, for that; most of all when he's in the open air.

I wonder if we ain't more children than anything else? And what is more God-like than the innocence of such! I felt as playful out under them trees as though I had been only a school miss, instead of the wife of an elder in the Presbyterian church! I believe the beauty of life lays in just such simplicity. I wish we could always have been give our freedom, as the primitive people was, to develop it in.

It ain't so much what you do, as the feel-

ing of relationship with what's about you—the sky, the grass, the flowers, the birds and the trees—that makes the difference inside. Before we reached our destination last night I felt myself to be a better woman, more as though I had the divine right to breathe and expand my own individuality along with the rest of God's creation. We don't give enough scope to the divinity in our humanity.

After we got all rigged up in proper shape again, after our inner man had been refreshed—and it's a pity we don't think of feeding our souls as often as we do our stomachs—we made a bee line towards Santa Ana via Orange.

When we got to Orange we stopped for a few minutes to look it over. It has a beautiful little park right in the central part of the store district; have to go around it, in fact, being set right in the middle of the street, to keep on the road towards Santa Ana.

A pretty good piece of road from Orange swung us into Santa Ana just as the sun was setting.

Santa Ana is about forty miles from Los

Angeles, and the country through which we passed was mostly farming country. That it was pretty ain't no need for me to say—all California so far is like a beautiful picture that I've seen. It made a fine day's ride.

When we got into Santa Ana we found a large thriving town. Hotels was in fair shape, and people agreeable. So, all being to our taste, we settled down for the night.

Then Hezekiah and Dominie, after having the horses seen to and our rooms engaged, began to look around for some fun for the evening. Hezekiah had such a serious life of it to home, I didn't blame him for wanting a little enjoyment now. And they found it; which might be expected from the spirit they set out in.

As we was sitting in the dining-room of the hotel at dinner, Hezekiah says to us:

"I've got tickets for living pictures tonight —the moving show kind—and I hope they'll be good."

"Hezekiah, you shock me!" says Lucy Jane. But I see by her face she was going. Only, you know, she was so terrible proper.

So after dinner we walked down the main

street of the place, where was the most stores, and stopped in front of a low wide building. Into this the people was pouring, and we took our chance with the rest.

The people all being finally seated—and we got a good front pew—the light went out.

Now a whole lot of people walked on the platform in front of us. It was in a park, and after looking around a little, they went along to their homes. Only one sentinel continued walking back and forth. Pretty soon his wife and little baby come along, and he was real glad to see them. Then his wife put the baby in his arms and walked off, and he acted like he didn't know what to do. Of all the helpless critters, a man takes the cake where the care of a baby is concerned!

The wife was going out for the afternoon, and so the husband began to amuse the baby the best he could. He threw it up and down in the air; he tossed it from side to side; he trotted off, holding it under his arm, like a bundle; and divers other man-like capers. Of course the baby got to crying.

Jack, the father—to make a long story short—saw one of his friend sentinels pretty

soon and walked over to him. The friend thought the baby was powerful nice and took it in his arms. Poor child! But just then two things happened:

The father of the child saw another friend sentinel coming, and thinking the baby safe with the friend he was talking to, turned away to meet the other man. The sentinel who held the baby spied a nursemaid coming with whom he was great friends. So, dropping the baby from his arms on to a wheelbarrow that stood near at hand, he made for the girl, man-fashion.

Now this girl had a trick of turning her back to the baby in the carriage. It's a wonder that more of them don't fall out.

Well, about this time Jack began to be uneasy about his baby, and turned around to look for it. It was nowhere to be seen, and he was pretty near crazy. He'd been more so if he'd known what had happened! For the man of the wheelbarrow, who was doing some work in the park, had come up with a shovelful of dirt and never looking where he threw it, covered the baby up and wheeled the barrow farther on down the street!

When the man had done that terrible thing, I had groaned out loud, but he must have been deaf, for he didn't pay a speck of attention to me.

Just then, at a little distance, after running wildly around, Jack saw his friend talking to a girl. So, slipping up to them, as fast as he could, he looked eagerly in the carriage to see if his friend had deposited his baby there. Seeing there was two, he took up one in great joy and ran off with it.

In a minute the nurse girl turned around, and lo!—one of the twins was gone. Then the friend sentinel and girl began going round and round, frantic. The sentinel outstripped the girl and began poking round in the bushes and among the trees for the missing child.

Meanwhile the nurse had sighted the child in Jack's arms and made for him. She immediately tried to take the child, but Jack wasn't willing to give it up without a struggle. Then she began to try force.

It was now that the friend sentinel had come to the heap of rubbish the workman had dumped on the ground, underneath which I knew was the poor suffering lamb.

He poked around and didn't seem to find it. "It's there, right before you!" I called out. "If you don't hurry, it'll be smothered!" I warned him. But still he didn't seem to find it.

Grabbing Lucy Jane's arm, I says:

"O, Lucy Jane, don't let him leave it. You've been a mother yourself, and know how it feels!"

But Lucy Jane only said:

"Sh——!"

"Sh—— nothing!" says I. "I'm human if I'm not a mother, and am bound that child ain't going to be smothered!" And I was getting in earnest. Just then he uncovered it—sound asleep.

With the baby in his arms, he went looking for his friend, and found him in the predicament I just told you of. Of course when the father see his own child, he was surprised he could have made the mistake, and was willing to give up the other—but not quick enough. While he was holding both babies, his wife appeared on the scene!

She took it in in a glance. Woman-like, she jumped to conclusions. She was raving

mad instanter, believing him to be the father of both children. She snatched her own baby and walked off with it in a huff. Ain't that the way, lots of times, with all of us? Always hasty to judge, and slow to be charitable and give opportunity to clear things up that looks doubtful!

I declare the doings of those people had most worn me out, for my sympathies had been powerfully enlisted. I was glad when such excitements, of which there was considerable more, was over.

Lucy Jane and Hezekiah didn't need to tell me on the way to the hotel that what I had seen had been only pictures! Such explanations was some more of Hezekiah's pleasantries, I suppose.

Tomorrow we start again towards the Land of Promise, and, like Moses, I hope to view it first from a height.

A knowledge of the Bible is a great comfort, I find, in going through this vale of tears. And it always adds philosophy to your reasoning.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XIII.

ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA,
July 10th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

We are still travelling towards the Promised Land of Coronado Beach. Up hill and down, beside the wide blue ocean, and over the foothills, we have journeyed so far.

Ain't it wonderful that for years and years you'll be confined to one piece of landscape, seeing only such changes as the seasons bring to it, and one set of faces; then all of a sudden the whole world seems to be open to you, and new and strange people cross your life and become terrible important items in it! When you stop to think of it, it's like being shut up in one room with a single picture, and your every-day family about you, when the curtain rises and you are in fairyland and wonderful beings taking you in their midst as one of them.

That's just the way I'm feeling these days. Not that the single landscape and the afore-

mentioned set of faces ain't just as dear to me; I believe they are more so than ever. But it's like tasting of the same relish all the time. When you get a chance to taste another, it seems to give you fresh appetite to go back to your daily living. I'm sure I shall enjoy the home and you more'n ever when I get back to Wayneville. The old country homestead and winding, wooded roads, though old, are dear.

The day we left Santa Ana we had one of the weirdest rides you can imagine. Of course we didn't know a speck of the road ahead of us, none of the party being over it before. So every turn we come to presented a new landscape, and, occasionally, a new difficulty. But these was very few, for Hezekiah is a good driver, and the horses are safe animals.

We passed through some farming country, and swung along by fine houses, when we struck out for San Juan Capistrano.

But we hadn't gone far on our way towards San Juan before we struck the loneliest country you ever imagined. There was rolling hills all around us. On each side they

rose in a succession of little mountains; in front of us, as far as we could see, they waited to greet us; as we turned to look back they was watching us, regretful. And well they might, for I should think they would get terrible lonesome.

There was not a house, nor a wagon, nor a human being in sight. Not a sound broke the stillness of the air. Even the birds and insects made up their minds to be excused from such silent grandeur, and flipped towards habitation. The day was perfect, but, as far as we could see or hear, we was like Adam and Eve, alone in the universe. The awesomeness of it all settled down on every one of us. Even Dominie was quiet. The whole scene pressed down on us with a thousand-pound weight of loneliness, holding every sense in an iron grasp of uncanniness.

I never realized before what an awful thing it would be to be alone in the world—without any other human beings, I mean. No wonder Robinson Crusoe put to it to build him a raft to get away from himself!

And so we continued for about thirty miles. Though the scenery only changed from one

stage of intense solitude to another, we was really progressing towards our objective point.

The only suggestion we had of anybody besides ourselves being in the world, was a railroad track that we went beside some of the way; although this didn't heave in sight until we had got over a good share of the aforementioned miles.

I see, as soon as we come in sight of the track, that Lucy Jane was afraid the horses would be scared if a train come along. So she tried to make Hezekiah hurry them horses all he could, and he did to please her. I knew she was straining her ears to hear the sound of wheels. Finally when we'd almost give up the notion that such was anywhere near due, I noticed Hezekiah lay the whip on the horses. Then I heard Dominie say something low to his pa. After this we began to go awful fast, and I see, by looking ahead, what Hezekiah was making for.

A little white house and barn, with a gate leading from the road into it, was just before us. I now begun to hear sort of a low rumble, and I hoped we would make it before the horses see the train. Lucy Jane grabbed

the side of the seat and turned white. But it was too late. The engine come racing around the bend, whistling and snorting, and the cars looked like they was running to catch it.

Before it got quite to us, Hezekiah reached the house and was going to turn into the barnyard, when he see the gate was shut. All hope in that direction was gone.

Fortunately the horses wasn't a bit afraid, and scarcely looked at the train as it whisked by. But I can now imagine how the souls of people sink when they find the gates of hope shutting them out, when they've been making a race to get in.

About eight miles more swung us into the place where Saint John was made to set up as a pattern to the world. Just before we come in sight of it, Hezekiah says to me:

"San Juan, Aunt Phoebe, is one of the places where there is an old Mission. People in this country think a great deal of them."

"I've remarked it to Ephraim, many's the time," says I, "that the Missions seem to do more real good than the churches. They get hold of the people better, somehow. I'll be

real glad to set me down in one, and I do hope they'll have some real lively hymns to kind of cheer us up!"

Hezekiah looked at Lucy Jane and they both sort of laughed before he answered. When he had commenced to tell me about the place where they held gospel services, he had put both lines in one hand, and swinging one arm over the back of the seat, had turned round so as to face us. Then he said:

"The history of the Missions is very interesting, Aunt Phoebe, and I'm sure you have never been in the kind to which I'm alluding. These Missions were founded by the Fathers of the Catholic Church, in the days of the first settlement in this country, and when there was mostly Indians to attend them—"

"Good gracious," says I, "we ain't coming to them critters, be we?"

Hezekiah give a little laugh—it does make him so jolly being out in the open air—and says:

"But now these Missions are mostly in ruins."

"For which the Lord be thanked!" says I, feeling that I was in no immediate danger, anyway.

When we come in sight of San Juan, I looked for the Mission. There it was, right on the hill, close to us. Hezekiah hadn't exaggerated about the ruins; I see that. He drove, first, all around it, slow. It must have been a great big building in the day of it. The walls was standing in some places, and in others they was crumbled down to the ground. There was an old cemetery with crosses and iron rails around some of the graves, and wooden crosses and sticks on others. But one corner of the building was in pretty good repair, and in this they hold services every Sunday. Hezekiah told me that there was no Indians in the place now, but the Mexicans and Spaniards thought a great deal of the father and the teachings carried on there. On one side there was places made in the walls like windows, in each of which hung a bell. These are rung by means of a rope, and people are thus called to church, even today.

Having satisfied our eyes with the picture

of the Mission, through whose doors Indians(!) in all states of mental and moral darkness had filed, we begun to cast about for a place for the night. And now, for the first time, we begun to see what kind of a place we was in. The memory of it still gives me the shivers! The houses was broken down stucco ones, and the Mexicans poor and careless-looking. There was only two streets of these hovels and one hotel. We drove around and around it in anxious thought as to what to do. Hezekiah didn't say much, but I guess he thought a good deal. Yet I don't think he was looking for danger so much as, man-like, for fun.

With an inward groan, we stopped at the door of the hotel. At this point the hotel proprietor come out, and he was real good-looking.

He said he could accommodate us for the night, also our horses. So there was nothing to do but to go in. Not that we had anything against the hotel or its proprietor; they appeared all right, but how could they be responsible for the people around them?

We had a real good supper and then retired to our rooms. They wasn't exactly first-class—

I don't suppose we could expect that—but they was clean. What I did object to, though, was the piazza onto which they opened. This run all around the house. In the daytime it must have been pleasant; at night it was dangerous.

But nothing happened; and never was morning more welcome than when I see its first beams stealing up to scatter the darkness out of the sky.

Where we stopped at night we calculated to buy our lunches to carry the next day, thus insuring us fresh and tasty food by the way. We thought, of course, we would be able to get such from the hotel here. So in the morning Hezekiah spoke to the cook about it—the proprietor not being up, and the single store not opened. But the cook said there wasn't enough in the house to possibly spare us a lunch!

Lucy Jane and Hezekiah didn't know what to do; but I did.

Before we went into breakfast I says to Dominie, real low:

"Dominie, I want you to put on your overcoat to eat breakfast in." Though it was

summer, we always had to put on heavy wraps when we started driving early in the mornings, for the nights are fine and cool here during this season. He looked up surprised, so I explained:

"You know your pa is paying twice as much as it's worth to have us put up in this place, and now they say they can't spare us any lunch. As self-preservation is the first law of nature, I intend to have sufficient to stay the gnawings of our stomachs at noon, if we find ourselves away off in the country where we can't buy nothing to eat!"

"Golly," says Dominie, "we'd be killed and starved and everything else if you wasn't along, Aunt Phoebe! You're worth a dozen men to any party. You're a regular brick, that's what you are."

So we struck a compact, under which he wasn't to laugh or let anything be seen that would cause suspicion. I knew how I should manage my own affairs.

Accordingly, when we filed into breakfast, Dominie had on his overcoat with the deep pockets. I had a long coat on my arm, which I laid on my lap as I sat down, with

the inside turned up to me. We was thus prepared for operations.

Seemingly, Hezekiah and Lucy Jane had had a good night's rest, for he was real bright and pleasant-looking. She was looking refreshed and had her hat on for the ride. They was both in good spirits.

"Hello, Dominie," says his father, "you ain't got the chills, have you?"

"No," says Dominie, as sober as could be, "I'm only preventing having them; the window's open at the back of the table, you see!"

So with this satisfactory excuse, we set down to our meal; and I made sure Dominie sat next to me.

First they brought on oatmeal. Of course this was hopeless for future needs. Then they set forth some bacon and eggs, with toast and muffins. Now I begun to get busy. Lucy Jane and Hezekiah was took up with talking, and I felt sure we could do lots of work before they looked at us.

Calling the waiter, I says:

"I'm very delicate about eating eggs in the morning. My stomach won't take them

fried, so just bring me four hard-boiled ones."

The waiter's eyes popped wide open, and Dominie nearly snickered out, but I looked grim and determined, so the waiter went forth.

Meanwhile I buttered four muffins and, splitting them one by one, on the sly, dropped a piece of bacon in each. These, when everybody in the room was busy with their own food, I sneaked down beside me and dropped in Dominie's pocket.

"Dominie," says I, "ain't you ashamed to be eating so little, and you a boy!"

He took the hint, and when the waiter brought them four hard-boiled eggs, which he set down grudgingly, Dominie handed up his dish for more bacon and eggs.

"O, waiter!" says I, as he was walking off, "if you have any fruit in the house handy, I wish you'd bring us a good supply. We've got quite a ride before us, and my stomach being so delicate, requires the tonic of fruit."

"I should think it would require something for them boiled eggs," he grumbled, but he moved off.

Hezekiah and Lucy Jane looked at me in speechless astonishment, but they was learning me well enough to say nothing when they see that set look about my mouth. But they found out what it all meant soon enough.

Now the eggs I dropped in the sleeve of my coat, one by one, as the occasion offered. Only one I shelled, in order to deceive them, and that I put between two slices of bread.

Then batter cakes was brought on. I never eat very hearty at breakfast time, and so, as I really didn't want the three they set before me, I buttered each one carefully and laid them away with the eggs.

But the harvest arrived when the fruit come. They brought a big dish of apples, bananas and grapes. I watched with envious eyes every bit that the members of my party took; though, seemingly, I was eating more than anyone else. Yet, if they'd noticed me, they'd have seen the food went out of sight some other way than by my mouth. I didn't rest contented till the whole dish was emptied.

By this time we had a good substantial lunch for all of us, and I was well pleased.

When we got out of sight of the hotel, Dominie burst out laughing. Then I opened the coat up, careful, that I had held like a precious bundle all this time.

When Hezekiah and Lucy Jane see the point, they tried to set up a little remonstrance. But it was no use. My nephew laughed till the tears rolled down his cheeks!

They say stolen fruit is the sweetest, and I'm sure no lunch could have tasted better to us than that one did. My conscience didn't hurt me a bit, for Hezekiah had paid a scandalous price for our accommodations. So much for San Juan!

We hadn't driven more'n about five miles when we come full onto the view of the ocean. The horses first climbed a bluff, and I felt that if I didn't live to see the Promised Land of Coronado Beach from a height, I had seen the Pacific from such.

After leaving the bluff, we rode beside the waves on the shore, and the salt sea breezes was invigorating. I was very thankful the horses wasn't afraid, and I knew Lucy Jane was, too.

Just in front of us, as we crossed a railroad

track to go still nearer the ocean, was a light express wagon and two men with two women in it. They had a tent along in the back of the wagon, and a dog running underneath. They had nice, pleasant faces, and I did hope they was going the same way we was; for, hearing some of the coast was very dangerous for driving, we had made up our minds to strike inland from a place called San Luis Rey, and continue from there to our destination, on better roads. To do this, we had to leave the automobile road, and of course none of us knew the way. Leaning over, I says to Hezekiah:

"Why don't you ask them people if they be going our way?"

Now, in the city, I just know Hezekiah would have been too absorbed in his own work to have bothered asking questions of anybody; but it's wonderful how common distresses develops the feeling of family relationship in the human race. So he called out:

"Are you on the way to San Luis Rey, too?"

The man turned round—the other was only a boy, as I see now—and says:

"Yes, we're going to Escondido."

"Goody!" says Dominie. "Then they can show us the way. Let them go ahead, pa." And he did.

As I look back on it now, I don't see what we could have done without these people. We need never be anxious about being supplied with the necessities of life; for when we get to the point where we need them, there they be, waiting for us. These people seemed sent from heaven.

If our ride the day before had been thrilling, this was ten times more so. We would go by the ocean a way, and then, in order to get around a big headland that went out into the water, we would have to follow the road away back for eight or ten miles among the foothills.

And, by the way, the sight of the places where the water had washed up into the land was worth looking at. It had made great caverns and figures in the limestone, and was something wonderful to study. No human artist could ever have reached it in perfection of outline.

By and by we struck away from the ocean altogether, and began winding in and out

among the hills again. Southern California is such a hilly country!

Well, as I said, there was hills—no end to them. But the people we'd took up with had been over the ground before and so knew the way. When noon come, I says:

"Now what would we have done without that lunch?" And we all ate heartily of it, I can tell you.

We got a real shady place by a spring of water, where the horses could drink, and the men, unfastening the animals, led them to it. There was two trees, a little distance from each other, and each party took one.

When our companions first set foot under theirs, they struck up a song in kind of a chant. It made me think of the Pilgrims in the Wilderness; and it pleased me wonderful, too.

After lunch we set forth, refreshed, but not knowing what we had to go through. We had all got real well acquainted during our feeding-time, and each knew something of the other's history.

We had travelled about five miles after lunch, when we come to what the people in

this country call a canyon. I suppose I shall have to try to describe this freak of nature to you.

A canyon is a valley between two high wooded hills, though sometimes you're not right down on the level bottom of the valley, but are on the side hill yourself, yet the hills are near to you on each side. When the wind or a storm passes a canyon, it's like the feeling in a tunnel. It sweeps everything before it. This particular canyon was called San Onefre Arroyo. At one place it was so steep that everyone in the front wagon got out but the driver, and Lucy Jane, Dominie and I preferred the solid earth to trusting to them horses' sense of responsibility.

You can imagine, if you like, the figure we cut. The hills, thickly wooded, was in front and on each hand. On the side, up towards the top of one of the hills, the road wound round and round, and it was a terrible narrow one. Down below us was about a hundred feet and the road was amazing steep. Ahead walked the young woman; behind her the aunt; behind the aunt the boy; and then come the express wagon. The dog was here,

there, and everywhere. Following, come our carriage with Hezekiah driving. Behind that walked Lucy Jane; behind Lucy Jane walked myself; and behind me trotted Dominie. We looked like we was out of our heads!

"Hurray for the mountain parade!" Dominie shouted. And the idea pleased us all.

We see the most beautiful scenery I ever imagined in my life in that canyon, for pretty soon we got down to where the road was wider and nearer the level bottom of it. The mountains on each side, behind and before—one commencing where another stopped, for the road was very winding—was just like a panorama picture, only it was dead silence. Loneliness held complete sway except for our two wagonloads.

We come in sight of San Luis Rey about sunset. It looked so quiet and peaceful, laying like a secluded and happy village among the now sun-kissed hills, that it seemed like the comfort of a promise in the Scriptures, after passing through a hard and trying ordeal in life.

There was a pretty river which separated the village from the road on which we entered

the place, and we crossed this by means of a bridge. In the shallow part of it cows was taking their evening drink, and on the bank grew sumach and reeds, with here and there clusters of sunflowers and bamboo cane interspersed with rushes. These bent in a silent swaying as the slight evening breeze sprung up from the west.

All nature was calm and trying to woo my spirits into partaking of the atmosphere it set forth for us as we entered this peaceful scene. And it was successful; for I leaned back in our wagon and feasted my eyes on the soft harmony of colors that was presented to view. All the way from the varicolored hills about us, as the sun made the tops of each a different hue, changing from a yellow and green at the base to a soft violet grey at the summit, and from a soft brown to a rose on another, to the distinct color of the prolific growth of grass and weeds and dainty yellow-flowered bushes through which we rode, made a picture for the hand of a master to portray. The Mission—for there was one here also—was set up on the hill, keeping watch over all. There

was only a few houses lying clustered in the village, but in the country round about we could see many outlying farmhouses.

In one of these we found lodging for the night, and our companions set up their tent in an empty field near by.

The next morning I began to feel like myself again, for I had had a quiet, peaceful rest. The life was pastoral and simple in this pretty place, and the people kind-hearted and honest. In fact, they didn't even lock their doors at night. Living near to nature's heart brings out the best in everybody. I was refreshed enough for any adventure.

About ten o'clock we all went up to visit the Mission—all but Dominie. He stayed at the blacksmith's shop, watching the master shoe one of the horses.

When we got up to the Mission door, a Mexican priest, from a house close by on the grounds, come out and met us.

He let us into the building by opening a door with a key. As we stepped in from the light, it looked so dark we could hardly see for a minute. When we did, before us was

a deep room with a stone floor. Benches, without any backs to them, was set in rows, like a church. The walls was white-washed and little places made in them up towards the top, in which was placed images. Upon the side towards the front, looking like it was suspended in the air, was a little round platform set out from the wall. This was gained access to by a winding staircase leading to it. In this the early Fathers used to stand to preach. But this they don't use now. Instead, they have an altar set at the end, on the center and end of which images and lighted candles are placed, like the Catholic churches all over the country have. It was a characteristic interior of the old and new form of worship in this part of the world.

Then he took us in a room where the supplies was kept. Here he showed us wonderful pieces of work that had been brought over from France a hundred years ago. These was some wooden carvings of the Saints and the Virgin Mary, looking as life-like as if they could speak.

As we was going out towards the front again,

we see some curious but very pretty decorations on the walls and the doors. This the priest said the Indians had done as a thank-offering for the interest that had been took in them. The colors was beautifully modulated, all the way from a bright red to a soft violet, and the design was very novel and artistic.

We then went into a little circular side room near the front door. This was all of stone—walls, ceiling and floor. In the middle of the room was a big baptismal font, also of stone, out of which water had been sprinkled on the heads of Indians, when tribes of such roamed these hills.

The priest told us that this room held a mystery that hadn't been explained. So he began to sing for us, to show us what it was. The song was in a monotone—I could have made more fancy notes without half trying myself—and the words he used was Latin. Yet I am sure it made a more profound impression than I could have on his listeners. Listening earnestly, we began to see the mystery he was trying to explain in this way to us. After each note of the chant the echo

came clear and distinct from every part of the room. It was as though floor, walls and ceiling had all took up the hymn and joined in with the human voice. It was really wonderful, though it was weird. If the Indians was a superstitious people, I don't wonder this had a great effect upon them.

All around was the quietness of death, and in this semi-lighted old Indian Mission you could hear a pin drop—all but the singing room and chanting priest with his eyes uplifted and his priestly robes tied on him like the patriarchs of old. It was really uncanny, but as an example of by-gone scenes in early California life, it was fascinating.

We walked back to the blacksmith shop and got in our carriage, ready once more for driving. But I was really sorry to leave them quiet-looking hills and that pastoral life. Still, we had our Promised Land to make.

From San Luis Rey we come to Escondido, and here we found a letter from Angelina. She didn't mention Mr. Earlham, but spoke of Mr. Grey. I do hope he won't get any undue influence over her!

Tell Ephraim I'm still on the road towards the Land of Promise. But of all the roads to such a land of happiness, the one by his side is the quickest and the safest.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XIV.

CORONADO, CALIFORNIA,
July 16th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

The race is finished! Two days ago we crossed the river from San Diego to Coronado, and lo, our haven is reached!

It took us two weeks to make the distance of one hundred and fifty miles, so you can imagine we have taken our time and stayed days at various places along the way. I shall fill in all the little matters of interest to you when I get back to Wayneville; finish putting the jelly on top of the tarts, as it were, since I've filled them with the fruit of our experience by the way.

Between Escondido and San Diego was a part of the road they give the name of Poway Pass to. As soon as I heard it, I says to Hezekiah:

"Don't that sound pretty Indiany to you? Suppose them red men are laying in ambush just ready to aim their bows and arrows at us?"

But Hezekiah was sure it was all right, for he said that it was down on the automobile map.

It wasn't long before we come to the place where I expected to make the immediate acquaintance of the Indians.

This Poway Pass meant the winding up and up and around the side of a mountain. Curve after curve loomed ahead, and in places the road was so narrow you just couldn't pass another team. It looked more'n more to me like we was being seduced to our ruin, for the precipice below us, though most beautiful in trees and shrubs, with here and there a winding brook, grew deeper and deeper. There was we set, four tiny human beings in comparison with the other works of God around us, a little moving speck on the slanting side of a Heaven-kissed hill.

Around us, on every side, rose peak after peak, looking fresh and beautiful in the light of the cloudless morning. One place we come to, as we turned one of the seventy curves—for Dominie counted them—there stretched ahead of us a beautiful valley, and from this point we could see probably seventy-five or

a hundred miles. The air is so rarefied in California that you can see immense distances with the naked eye; and this now come in handy for fine views on this Indian Pass.

I admired the scenery to the utmost. You know I always appreciate things as I go along, for no knowing whether you'll ever go the same way twice in this world. In fact, I make it as much of a duty to use the two eyes the Lord has give me, as to use the two hands and feet in service for someone else, to make them happier.

Some such thought was traveling lazily around in my meditative mind when I heard a howl ahead of us, around the nearest curve.

Grasping Lucy Jane's arm, in low but excited tones, I says:

"They're coming, Lucy Jane! They're coming! If that ain't an Indian's war whoop, may the Lord have mercy on my soul!"

But a minute more brought only a big automobile with a hideous-sounding horn into view. The horses was some scared, being come upon so sudden, but they soon quieted down again.

With two such good horses ten miles is soon covered, even if you do have to go slow and careful, and ahead looked plain sailing. In due time we drew nigh to San Diego.

Although Coronado was just across the bay from San Diego, Hezekiah thought it would be pleasant to put up at a hotel there for a day or two. The part that took my attention the most was an attractive Japanese porch from which you could get a fine view of the whole city. To this part we repaired at once.

As Hezekiah had visited San Diego several times, he could point out places of interest to us from this porch. Before us lay the San Diego harbor—which they say is one of the finest in the world—and the ocean. Like a group of buildings on an island lay Coronado, though it wasn't an island, being joined to the mainland at one corner by a strand. In some places this strand is not more than one hundred feet wide, Hezekiah says, but it can be drove over in safety. Beyond Coronado lay some hilly land which he pointed out as Point Loma.

The next day we looked over the Chamber

of Commerce, where they have wonderful fruit of all kinds from different parts of the County, preserved in alcohol. They also have fishes, birds, stones and minerals in interesting array.

Having seen these things and rested some, we was ready for fresh adventures.

Then we started for Coronado by the way of the ferry boat Ramona. I wonder if Ramona really ever did sail over in it.

Down the broad walk that runs by the ocean, leading from the hotel grounds, there come first a bathing house. Then beyond was rows and rows of tents. It looked to me like the tents of the Ishmaels on the desert that I read a story of once, only the desert here was the sand plus the water. Here, Hezekiah told me, stood the famous Tent City.

Maybe you can imagine my surprise when he told me that there was people who actually paid a lot of money to stay in them tents for a couple of weeks or a couple of months.

While we was eating our dinner at the hotel, I heard some people at the next table talking about the necessity of burning sul-

phur in houses you rented at the Beach. They said you never could be sure that disease hadn't been before you in taking up its abode in them.

The idea kept bothering me all through the meal, though I knew it wasn't no use to speak to Lucy Jane of it, for she would believe you couldn't catch a disease unless you made up your mind to. But there was Hezekiah, Dominie and myself to consider.

The next day we set out to look for a cottage by the sea. After looking around a piece, we found one beautifully furnished right on the ocean front. But I felt sure, though no one was in sight, that every chair had sitting in it a ghoulish corpse of disease, looking at us with eager eyes to see which to make the victim of.

No one had gone with us, outside of our party, to look at the cottage. So, as I was the last out of the door coming away, I was supposed to lock it. I was just drawing the door to, the others having walked on ahead, talking, when a thought struck me.

When we got back to the hotel, a few minutes before lunch, I says to the party:

"Just go up to your rooms to prepare for the meal, and I'll be up in a minute. I've begun to have kind of a headache, and I'll step into the drug store, just underneath here, and get some headache powders." So they went up and I went down.

It's true I bought a five-cent bottle of cologne—for that's real good to smell of when your head aches, and is also good as a disinfectant—but I also bought a pound of sulphur! As we was to sleep in the new house that night, no time was to be lost.

After lunch, Hezekiah and Lucy Jane thought they would go down to the band concert in the Tent City, and Dominie walked along with them. I told them my head was feeling kind of bad, and so I'd rather not go.

As soon as I see they was really out of sight, I put on my hat with a determined spirit. The package of sulphur and some matches I held in a death-like grip, for I was on my way to fight them ghosts I'd seen in the morning!

A few blocks brought me to the new house, and then, just as I walked boldly up to the front door, I realized I didn't have the key!

What to do I didn't know. But my brain didn't desert me for long, for it soon turned out, in its working, a new suggestion.

Although there was a man gardener working on the big lawn of the next house, I didn't like to ask no favors of him. So I walked round to the back, trying the side door on the way, and all the windows; but none would open. Then I started round the other side—the side towards the big house next door, where the gardener was working. Here I found one window that would give, and I raised it carefully, first making sure that that man's back was turned. I climbed up by holding onto a trellis, and was three-quarters in, when I felt one foot being pulled from without, while the voice of a man said:

"Not this time, old lady! I can protect my neighbors yet; so this way!" And he give that off foot another yank.

You see, Susanna, I was just kind of balancing myself on the window-sill, as it were. If that man let go my foot sudden, I would go in the house head over heels; if he kept on jerking, he'd dislocate my hip, for I was bound not to give up my enterprise.

"Not this time, old lady! I can protect my neighbors yet."

"Hold on, neighbor!" says I. "No, I mean let go!" I corrected, "but of course your idea is right, only—" and I was struggling so I knew I was getting red in the face —"if you don't let go my foot, I'll sue you for salt and batter. I've hired this house from Mr. Long and lost the key!" And with that I give one terrible push with my foot, which sent him sprawling one way and me t'other!

But I was in, no gainsaying that, and straightway locked the window so he couldn't get to me. When he got up he made for the window and tried to raise it, still combative. But I only laughed and pulled the shade down in front of his face. Then, with a grim smile at them fiends of disease waiting for our party, with their hopes plumed so high, I set to work.

Out from the cupboard I brought saucers enough to set a table for a dinner party. Into each I poured sulphur, without prescribing how much. Then I set them all over the house, in every conceivable place. Next I set each to burning, and though it nigh choked me to death, I finished the business.

Then I swung out of the same window I got in, without being molested.

Towards evening Hezekiah and Lucy Jane come back to the hotel. By this time Hezekiah kind of wanted to go to his own house, to see if all was right for the night, he said; so we all prepared to walk over.

When we arrived, boy-like, Dominie run to open the door first. We was several feet behind him when he flung it open, but, too distinct, we heard what he said:

"Ginger crackers and molasses cakes!"—and turning round to us, holding his nose shut, he says: "Pa, there's been a skunk here since we were, as sure as the world!"

At that both Hezekiah and Lucy Jane stepped forward quick, but I wasn't in any hurry. I had thought the smell would have all died away before night, and I did hope it wouldn't upset Lucy Jane.

But here was another disappointment, for she was certainly considerably upset.

"Aunt Phoebe, I know this is your work," says she, turning round to me, kind of flushed —"if you would only learn to keep your hands off—"

"That's it exactly," says I. "But if I did keep my hands off we would all have been murdered and starved before this; and although you be willing to believe you can't catch no disease, the rest of us ain't come up to such spiritual exaltation, and we'd kind of like to save our lives and health for awhile yet."

P'rhaps Lucy Jane was mollified by the reference to that lunch, I don't know. But more calm, she says:

"If you could only see the light, Aunt Phoebe"—meaning Christian Science—"there is a wonderful amount of capability in your mind. Of that there is no doubt. Mortal mind is alone the exciting cause of all suffering, and sickness is never obviated by drugs, hygiene or any material method."

"Well, Lucy Jane," says Hezekiah, soothing, "when you get Aunt Phoebe converted, perhaps she will see the wisdom of your views; but for the present, I don't see any way but to put up at the hotel for another night. We must remember, too," he added, "that Aunt Phoebe did this out of real regard for us, and such sentiment is never

lost." And he smiled real pleasant at me as he closed the door, after first going in and opening all the windows.

I knew, down deep in his heart, that Hezekiah understood and was real grateful for my thoughtfulness. As for Lucy Jane, her expressed views had let off some of the steam of her displeasure.

Of course my conscience was clear as a whistle. Our health was saved and that was the principal thing.

After dinner the hotel people was to have some doings in the ball-room, and for this Lucy Jane was rigging up in great style. Though we hadn't brought much with us, she had taken care to bring an evening gown in the case; and since arriving she had met one of her fashionable friends, so she was special glad that she had been so thoughtful.

Hezekiah remarked to me, just as we were going to our rooms, that there was to be a lion of the evening, who travelled around a great deal, so that people made a terrible fuss over him.

I won't confess but what I was kind of scared at the idea of a wild beast being in

our midst, but I supposed they would have good strong chains to hold him.

When we all assembled in the room where was to be the doings, I looked in all directions for our animal of the wilds, but could nowhere see him. The only thing that I noticed much fuss being made over was a good-sized man with full dress on, around which the ladies was skipping and smirking like a lot of feather-brained critters. So I says to Dominie:

"I reckoned on tonight special for you, Dominie, for I know boys be so fond of seeing animals, and I thought it would be nice for you to see the lion. I wonder if it ain't got here, or whether it's broke loose and they're trying to catch it before bringing it in," and the simple idea of such happening made me look anxious towards the door.

"It's broken loose right over in that group of women in the shape of that man," says Dominie, "for he's the lion!"

I couldn't for the life of me see why he was a lion. Maybe he was a lion hunter, I thought, and I looked at him real interested.

Pretty soon the play begun, and the big man aforementioned fairly roared through his parts. I understood now why he was a lion.

Hezekiah paid fifty dollars for our two days' stay at the hotel, and the next day we come to the cottage, which we are enjoying to the full, especially as I no longer see them ghosts of disease occupying the chairs, and I can now sit down with comfort.

The ocean rolls in regular and peaceful swells far out to sea, breaking in white-crested billows on the shore just below the window in which I am sitting as I write this letter. Ahead is Point Loma and the buildings of the Theosophical School; Fort Rosecranz, from which guns are pointed towards the bay; and over on the other side lays San Diego.

Hezekiah is resting peaceful after his race, and we are all happy. We're looking forward to a trip to Mexico. Of this trip I shall write also.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XV.

CORONADO, CALIFORNIA,
July 21st, 19—

My dear Susanna:

The letter received at Los Angeles from you was forwarded me by my niece Angelina. I declare, it quite set me up to think that I was so much missed in Wayneville; for you said it seemed as though the life had quite gone out of the town since I left. It just proves what I have always inwardly thought, that everybody in the world is of use in some way to someone else. So we none of us live for nothing.

As to our stay here, we are enjoying it powerful. We go driving pretty near every day, eating our lunches wherever we contrive to stop at noontime. Most of the time this is in some grove or under a big shade tree.

We hadn't been located but a couple of days before we drove down to Mexico. As we could start from Coronado on this drive,

taking in the strand that connects Coronado with San Diego, Hezekiah brought the horses over, and we set out from this side.

It looked kind of dangerous to me before we started, for it was nothing but a long, narrow strip of sand. On one side of us was the broad and mighty Pacific, stretching out as far as the horizon. Nowhere could a thing but water be seen ahead on that side, and a flock of seagulls circling over its waves, while the billows broke in lines of white foam on the smooth shore. On the other side was the bay, without a boat or human being in sight. And all that kept us up, on the bosom of the water, as it were, was a strip of sand in some places no more than a hundred feet wide, and eight miles long.

The sand dunes on the strand was especial interesting to me. These was big heaps of sand, like little hills, that often cut off our view of one side or the other.

After we left the strand, we sprinted along at a pretty good pace toward the land that Cortez fought so desperate over. Though it's been quite a number of years since I attended school, I can remember as distinct as though

it was yesterday that room in the little red school-house set up on the hill in the grove of maple trees, where we learned the history of Mexico. It interested me then, and I felt double interested in it now.

And yet as we drew nigh unto it, I had kind of a gloomy feeling too. For this it's not easy to account. It was sort of a feeling that I had turned my back on the United States, and I felt almost as disloyal as though I had made up my mind to desert one of my friends.

But there was another reason. The country looked different too. It was just rolling hills, dry and brown-looking, with scarce any vegetation. Somehow, though it was very interesting, it give me a dreadful uncanny feeling.

Hezekiah said, as we was driving towards the monument which shows the dividing line between the United States and Mexico, so that you can stand with one foot in each:

"Aunt Phoebe, I hope you realize what historic ground we're soon to stand on, and what ancient people we are to see!"

"And be they all so old, Hezekiah?" I

asked. "P'rhaps the climate's kind of dried them up so they'll keep, like we salt down our pork to home, before we hang it up in the garret."

"I mean," says my nephew, "that the Mexicans, of whom we shall see many before we turn back, are supposed to be one of the lost tribes of Israel."

"Good grief!" says I, "ain't there no end to them lost tribes?"

Now you know my acquaintance up to date with them lost tribes hadn't been very edifying, and it didn't appeal to me special that I was to run across some more of them.

"As for me," says Lucy Jane, "I don't care so much about the Mexicans as I do inspecting the work of the Mexican Indians. I would really like to find a good Indian blanket to take home with me."

"Indians! May our bodies be preserved! You don't mean to say we're going where Indians are?" I asked, in fright. "Then, Hezekiah," says I, firm, and I put one foot out on the step, "you may call for me right here when you come back, for I shall sit under the shade of that tree till you return!

If I was to be cold forever," says I, turning to Lucy Jane, "I wouldn't apply to an Indian for a blanket to warm me!" And I took a firm hold of the side of the wagon to step out before I got altogether out of my own country.

But Lucy Jane put a detaining hand on my arm, saying:

"We shan't see the Indians, Aunt Phoebe, only their work that they give the Mexicans to sell for them."

And Dominie says:

"I'll protect you, Aunt Phoebe, and we may need you to get out alive ourselves."

Of course this settled the point with me, for I'd go through fire if I was needed to help anyone else. That's about all the real good there is in our living in this world.

Well, we presently swung into the Mexican village we set out for. There was one main street, on both sides of which were stores. In all I should say there was probably five stores, two or three restaurants, a church, the oldest Mission in Mexico, and a custom house.

I supposed when Hezekiah pointed the

custom house out to us, that we would have to go in and describe to them the customs of the United States as differing from those of Mexico.

I looked earnest for the new edition of the lost tribe, and I see them!

I don't suppose, Susanna, you've ever seen any native Mexicans, so I'll try to describe them to you. It was as easy for me to take full note of their features, for they didn't seem to have nary a thing to do in life but sit out in the sun, in all kinds of lazy positions, and dry up so as to live to be "ancient." In all probability, there is scarce a tribe that has so many interesting features.

Of course, with the Mexicans, as with every other tribe—lost or found—there's difference in the faces. But the national face I should describe so: oval in shape, with low forehead, high cheek bones, long eyes sloping towards the temples, fleshy lips, wide nose, coarse-moulded features and black hair and eyes.

One of the main features of a trip into Mexico is the Spanish dinner prepared at the restaurants for visitors. So Hezekiah had our horses put up in the open stalls

under a lean-to roof in the garden yard and fed. Then we walked into the public room, where there was two long tables.

At one of these we set down and looked around. There was a doorway dividing this room from a bar-room beyond it, and over the door was dried skins of animals waving with every passing motion of the door.

These catched my eye. I see they did Hezekiah's too, and I suggested he ask the man, who now appeared, what they was.

This man, by the way, had on a white apron like the butchers wear. In each hand there was a dish of steaming food, which he set down in front of us on the oil table cloth. One was cooked rabbit, and the other a Spanish stew. As he turned away to bring forth the rest of our repast, Hezekiah spoke to him.

"Are those skins ornaments," says he, "or are they the products of a hunt?"

When the man answered, it was easy to see that he wasn't a Mexican or Spaniard, but a Frenchman. He said:

"Dey are zee skins of de rattlesnake and de vild cat, vich is brought zu me ivery day,

and vich I hangs up vor de zale tu my customers."

"Every day!" says Hezekiah, "you don't mean there are so many rattlesnakes and wild cats around here that they are as plentiful as hen's eggs?"

"Jest zo," answered the Frenchman, "ze fields and ze voods, dey uv dem air so vull dat it no trouble is zu bring zem down to ze death." And he toddled back to his kitchen.

We all looked at each other, and the chills began racing up and down my back.

But now the Frenchman appeared with the rest of our dinner, which was beans, cooked in Spanish style, tamales, bread and black chicory coffee. Of the dinner Dominie was the first to taste.

"Red pepper and fire!" says he, at the first mouthful of the Spanish stew; and I echoed it as I took my first bite of a tamale.

There ain't no use trying to describe them dishes to you. The only ones that we could swallow at all was the rabbit and the beans. The tamales tasted like red pepper, catsup, and corn ground up and tied together in a

corn husk. Yet people actually like such eating.

The money might as well have been thrown away, for all the good that food did us; but we had the satisfaction of tasting a Spanish-Mexican dinner.

As I took further notice of that lost tribe, it was easy to see how these Mexicans could be called an ancient people. The sun preserved them from without, and the red pepper and seasoning from within. Both together cooked them dry, as it were.

After dinner we went over to the curio store, where they set their goods out in great array. I see Lucy Jane had her heart set on Indian blankets. She had the man of the store set them forth for her in the best light, asking questions about each. Presently she picked out two that was very showy, and which I supposed would be pretty cheap, seeing as the Indians made them. But the store keeper asked a scandalous price for them. Still, it didn't seem to daunt my niece in the least.

I give her a quiet nudge just as she was turning her head sideways, kind of critical,

to see if she had made the best selection.

"Don't you let them get your money away from you, Lucy Jane," says I, "they ain't worth it. I'll make two for you out of yarn that'll be twice as pretty!"

But she was set on her own notion. It does seem to me, sometimes, as though she just tries to see how much money she can fool away. It's needless to say that she bought them.

After packing away the Indian blankets on the floor of the wagon, we drove to a big round place, all fenced in, which they use for bull fights.

These are always held on Sunday, so of course we couldn't attend; though I'm sure we wouldn't have, if they'd been in the midst of one then. There's enough suffering in the world that you have to look on, without hunting for any that's unnecessary.

But they say there is the wildest kind of excitement at these bull fights; and the rows and rows of Mexican faces, set one above another on seats around the ring, set off with all kinds of bright coloring in their clothes, and red and yellow bandanna handkerchiefs float-

ing from their necks, show every degree of fiendish delight at the downfall of a brother. To bring about such, they goad the bull on in every possible way.

By this time we had seen all we set out to of Mexico, so we turned our horses' heads homewards. After riding a piece of that brown, dry, parch-looking country, we come to another custom house. It's no wonder they wanted to hear all they could of the customs of a civilized world, for their own weren't much to boast of.

As we was drawing nigh to this second custom house, Hezekiah says, laughing, to Lucy Jane:

"What value are you going to put on those blankets?"

"Well, I don't know," says she, thoughtful. "How much do you think?"

"What do you think they are worth, Aunt Phoebe?" says Hezekiah to me.

"Worth?" says I. "Nothing, but for a rug; for they ain't big enough to cover a three-quarter size bed. With just quarter of the money, I could have made you a real nice knitted quilt, or a nice pieced one like—"

and I was going to say "the one I'm making for Angelina and Mr. Earlham," but I caught myself in time and just ended up by saying, "I made last winter to home."

Hezekiah laughed, but said:

"Well, we'll have to set some price, for here comes the custom house officer, and he'll want us to pay something for them."

Now I had thought they had paid for them back in the store, but seeing as they hadn't, I didn't see no use to pay this man who hadn't had a thing to do with the bargaining. So, just before we got to the little house, I says:

"Hezekiah, you let me manage this, will you?" And Hezekiah says:

"Sure, Aunt Phoebe, just go ahead."

So when the big man come up to the wagon, with a real good-natured face, Hezekiah says with a twinkle in his eye:

"My aunt's the only one that's been making purchases!"

"Yes," says I, as the man whose custom it was to take money that didn't belong to him turned to me, "and I think it's mighty fortunate for you that you don't have to pay my funeral bill. I've already ate of

your fire in the restaurant back there and if you can get that there Spanish stew to the surface again, I'll pay the price of the dinner over. This it'll be worth to me, to say nothing of them tamales."

By this time the man was laughing as hard as he could, and says, waving his hand for us to go on:

"All right, if that's all she's purchased, I don't think we ought to charge her any more for it!" And on we drove.

Hezekiah and Lucy Jane acted real pleased with my management, and Dominie says:

"Bully for you, Aunt Phoebe! Now you've not only saved us from being murdered, starved and catching the consumption, but saved pa from hauling up good dollars for taking some goods out of Mexico."

I declare, I won't feel like leaving that boy when I go home if he keeps on being such a comfort!

A good swift drive brought us to National City, just about four miles from San Diego.

You can easily imagine that all this time I had been looking at every suspicious appearing tree trunk and shrub we had come

to, fearing that it might conceal a wild-cat. And to the ground I had cast my eyes many times, to see if any wriggling varmint of the dust was edging towards us, ready to spring. But it became increasingly evident that we was elected to get home safe and sound.

We all agreed, when we landed once more in our Coronado cottage, that of all our travelling no more unique trip would be taken than this one into Mexico.

Besides the trip to Mexico, we have visited the light house over at Point Loma. This place—Point Loma—is one of the most wonderful formations of land you could ever imagine, being cut up in peculiar shapes by the water. Here is also situated a wireless telegraph station.

We are looking forward to a trip to La Jolla, the place of caves, and Ramona's home at Old Town, next week. If Angelina were only with us my cup of enjoyment would be full; as it is, it's pretty nigh the top.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XVI.

CORONADO, CALIFORNIA,
August 1st, 19—

My dear Susanna:

Though I think this is the second or third letter I have written you from this place, I don't believe I have told you a thing about the city of Coronado.

But it is worth describing. It's a remarkably pretty, quiet, restful place. Only for the guns in view over to Fort Rosecranz, the whole atmosphere would be one of content with all existing conditions.

The founders of this city by the sea laid out the streets so that there wasn't a single angle or sharp corner in sight. They're just all curves and beflowered and bepalmed curbings. Hence our nerves are constantly soothed all unbeknownst to us.

Another peculiar thing, too, about the place is, that no matter what hour of the day, or time of the year, you go onto the beach, there's never more than five or six

people in sight. Though there's hundreds on the shore, sometimes thousands, they seem to scatter themselves around so that the sand on the beach is always inviting for a *teté-a-teté* without any listeners.

I can't imagine a more ideal and restful place for anyone to have a summer home in. Of course there's natures that likes jollity and life and a fuss of social doings the year around. But for me, give me communion with Nature, and three or four about me that are congenial, and I can draw in deep breaths of inspiration for future actions.

But as to our trip to Ramona's home in Old Town and La Jolla, about which I promised to tell you, there's so much to say I don't know where to stop nor where to begin.

The day we set out for our excursioning was one of them ideal ones that somehow set you to thinking of days that are past, wherein deeds have been did that last down through the years. The air was just balmy enough, and the sky placid enough to make one meditative.

The country around San Diego is wonderful historic ground. To begin with, San Diego itself is the most southwestern city in the United States; just the stepping-off point into Mexico. Then it's the land of Missions, where the Spaniards, as they come up from Mexico, after conquering California, set out to Christianize their new possessions. The oldest Mission in California, the San Diego Mission, is not far off; and to this we some day expect to make a trip. This day we had started to investigate historic points in another direction.

As we drove along, I couldn't help thinking of how Ramona—for Helen Hunt Jackson made this girl live and talk so in her book that she has led the whole world to believe her real—had lived and loved, struggled and almost died for what she thought was right.

With such thoughts in my mind, we soon come to Old Town; named so because here was where San Diego first started. And it *was* an old town! The buildings was all in ruins and tumbled down, fit abodes for the howling coyotes as they returned skulking

from their night maraudings on neighboring chicken coops.

At the entrance to the town was an old cemetery holding a few graves of early Mission Fathers, railed round by an iron fence. Then on the other side of the road, a little farther on, was the old church in which Ramona worshipped. Outside of this there was bells, two of them, that Hezekiah said had been brought from the San Diego Mission. These had ropes attached to them, so that they who ran might not only read the inscription on the side of the old metal, but pull the tongues, by using the rope, to see how the tone sounded.

A little farther along we come plumb onto the house in which Ramona passed such suffering hours, and where the call of the blood in her veins equalled the call of love in her heart.

The building was one story high, with a tiled roof, looking like red flower-pots set one inside of t'other. The walls was all standing, and was of adobe, though some broken down. Inside, the rooms, which was all open and had only the earth for a floor,

was braced up with poles. In the middle was a courtyard, where I suppose they used to raise their posies, and where Ramona walked out in the cool of the evening.

The scene where any human suffering, which comes out victorious, is carried on always seems like consecrated ground. Therefore, it seemed very proper to me that all around should be so still.

Pretty near opposite to Ramona's house was a piece of ground with a low iron railing around it, and marked by a cannon and a big flagstaff. Here was the spot where the first flag was planted in California, by General Fremont, while up on a hill to the right of this ground, was a green spot that marked Commodore Stockton's skirmish with the enemy.

Desolation and loneliness was on every side; for though these points of interest was in evidence, living beings wasn't. The two oldest palms in the United States, which are one hundred and thirty-five years old, seemed keeping guard over the whole.

There's no gainsaying, it was mighty interesting, but I was glad when we got out of

the place. I couldn't see what in the world the odd hundred inhabitants stayed for, unless it was to guard the sacred remains of such scenes. Still, it seems as though people live in all conceivable places where they can set down a house.

As we set our faces towards La Jolla, I was glad of the anticipated change to different scenes. We hadn't driven such a terrible distance till we come again to a view of the bay. Now we had all thought that the San Diego Bay had come to its finish some time back, and so we were surprised to see it burst again on our view, all but Hezekiah—he knew the country. Then he told us that this wasn't the real bay, but called the False Bay.

It seems that once a ship got in this bay, thinking it was the real one, and of course the natural thing happened—it got stranded.

Now isn't that like life? Every good thing has its counterfeit, and there are always them that mistake the false for the real.

But the scenic attraction of the day was to come with our sight-seeing in La Jolla, which we soon reached.

I couldn't help thinking of Moses once more as we entered the place, for the whole ocean was in sight from a height. The entire town is built up on the bluffs and so is tolerably safe from the incursions of the waves, but a terrible dangerous place for children. I really think even Moses would have had his view distracted from that beautiful sight of the promised land that lay before him, if he'd had some little Moseses going too near the edge of the precipice.

But, looking at the place from the standpoint of harboring grown-ups, it was really very fascinating. There was great huge boulders in the ocean against which the waters broke, when, after spraying high in air, it seethed in white foam around their base. From this it went rolling back to be gathered up in the arms of its mother again.

After we had put up our horses at the livery stable, we looked the place over careful.

We see quite a commotion down in the cove of the ocean—a place so sheltered by nature that it made a natural pool for bathing. So, going down a lot of steps from a

platform even with the street, we come out on the sand.

Doesn't it seem funny, Susanna, that people who are terrible particular about having every shred of their clothing and every strand of their hair just so, in meeting their friends during winter time, will get so familiar during such occasions that they show their figures and limbs and bunch their hair up any way? But I suppose it gets into the blood with the hot sun, and we felt it kind of creeping into ours, for both Hezekiah, Dominie and myself wanted to join the crowd and go in bathing.

So Lucy Jane agreed to look out for our valuables, and the trio went to don their dress suits. It didn't take us long to get rigged out; but I must admit I felt some embarrassed to issue forth before them people. You see my country modesty is bound to cling to me.

Hezekiah, being kind of broad-shouldered and solid, looked well in his bathing suit; Dominie looked ready for anything in his, and he remarked to me that I looked kittenish in mine. I felt like one, anyway, espe-

cially when they want to run off and hide. I insisted that Hezekiah and Dominie go on out and leave me to my desired meditations, and they finally consented.

Being left to myself, I took one step at a time, and I finally got more courage and begun to feel quite to home in the water, especially as I see everyone around me appeared to be having a good time. I was likewise quite took up with a terrible fat woman that was in bathing a little way off, and now appeared to pay an equal amount of attention to me. Funny how opposites seem bound to come together, even in the water.

But even from this interesting sight my attention was called away by something more important than affinities of any kind. It was then I begun to realize I had been called to go in bathing for some special purpose, and that that was the reason such unaccountable courage had been vouchsafed me.

It'll be hard for you to believe it, but I see coming towards me on the water a corpse, with its face turned up to the sky! Both arms was outspread and her features

looked awful white. Even her eyes was open, I suppose with the horror of being drowned. And yet those people never made the least motion towards getting her out of their midst, or seeing if, even yet, the water couldn't be pumped out of her.

I took a couple of strides forward in the water towards the oncoming object. As the corpse's head was towards me, her hair, which was floating, was the easiest to lay hold of. So I laid hold of it with a good firm grasp and begun dragging the woman by this means to the shore, behind me. I heard a most hideous yell, but that made me go all the faster, for it showed there was still some life.

Now the people was coming towards me in all directions, and the corpse itself was getting more'n more active. But I didn't suppose it could speak yet, for there was such a hollering all around that I couldn't hear myself think. I tell you, people are ready enough to lend a hand, but they don't like to be the one to take the lead; and this part I don't mind.

With a last desperate effort, I landed my burden. The corpse made a dash to get up;

—do you wonder, after feeling she was forever lost?—but I knew this was the critical moment. So I threw her down on the ground, for it was now or never to get that water out of her, and I leaned over and with both hands rolled her on the sand.

Now all the people come at me as though I had been her murderer, instead of her rescuer! Such is the thanks you generally get for turning your hand over to help another. For the moment I was so excited I was pretty nigh to an anarchist.

"You inhuman critters!" I says to the crowd, who was holding my arms. "May the death of this poor woman be upon your heads! Why don't you hold her up by the heels to see if you can't shake her dry?"

But just now Hezekiah, who I see had been laughing again—how could he in the face of such a calamity?—finally got near enough to say to me:

"Why, Aunt Phoebe, the woman was only floating! There ain't a thing the matter with her."

Then, turning to the crowd, he says, "This lady has never been in bathing before, and

what she did was from the kindness of her heart. She thought the floating woman was a corpse. So that she was trying to restore life once more to a human being!"

As soon as they sensed this, they let go my arms, looked at each other, and began to laugh. Then they cheered. For a good action springing from the right motive in life, even when turned in a mistaken direction, appeals to human nature.

The woman, too, forgave me, as soon as she saw what I had been up to.

By this time we'd had all we wanted of the water; Hezekiah and Dominie had had a good bath, and I had tried to do my duty both to others and myself.

After we got dressed, we went to a boarding-house for a good dinner, after which we was to visit the famous cave so much talked about.

This had been described to me by Hezekiah as going in the earth from the ocean, like a big tunnel, under a part of the bluff—being washed out so by water during several centuries—and filled with rocks. A private party, with an eye to business, had seen the

money side of showing visitors such a work of nature, and had gone to great expense tunnelling down into the earth from above the cave, and putting a great number of steps leading down to it. I couldn't deny that it looked pretty from the outside.

It was from above the cave, down these stairs, instead of on a level with it, that you was expected to enter this show place. And so, as Hezekiah, Lucy Jane, Dominie and I passed through the narrow doorway into the curio store which these same speculators had set up in connection with exhibiting nature, I wasn't surprised to see a staircase leading to gloomy depths below.

When we entered I felt real brave. It's wonderful what a good warm dinner will lead anyone to do; but the cool draft from that staircase kind of dampened my ardor.

Hezekiah paid the dollar necessary to be piloted below, and the guide prepared to lead the way.

Before starting, he says, just as he was lighting his lantern:

"The water is so high at this time of the day that we will not be able to see the 'Woman

in White,' therefore much of the wonderful formation of strata will be hidden from view. But please note carefully, as we reach the bottom of the stairs, of which there are one hundred and thirty-six(!), the ceiling of the cave which hangs in jutting points and shows marvelous geological deposits."

The guide then started down with the lantern in his hand, bidding us keep close together. I took just two steps down, then I squatted on the stairs and took a survey. I was making up my mind rapidly about going down into that inky blackness with nothing to lay hold of but a stair-railing. Besides, the "Woman in White" was somewhere in waiting! Personally, I didn't care for ghosts.

"What do you say, Aunt Phoebe? Have you made up your mind yet?" says Hezekiah behind me.

"Not by a long shot will you get me down there!" says I. "The air alone from them lower regions is enough for me!"

"But think of the 'Woman in White,'" says Hezekiah.

"That's just what I'm doing," says I,

"and I prefer to think of her above ground."

"But wouldn't you be interested in seeing the mineral deposits in the stratas of the rocks?" he persisted.

"Nary an interest!" says I, "I'm more interested in depositing myself on this earth for awhile than anything else under the sun."

So, seeing he couldn't move me, he went past where I was sitting, and hurried to catch up with the rest.

I looked down in the darkness after my friends, and no sound reached me. So I got up, with a sigh, and went outside of the building and set down on the bench beside the door, waiting. Just ahead of me was some houses perched up on the side of a hill, and one especially attractive in the shape of a boat. In this, the woman who was in the store told me, a singer lived. So I viewed it well, wondering whether it would be worth while for me to build a house in such a shape which in after generations should be pointed out as the house that the singer, Phoebe Ann Lysander, lived in! On the other side was a deep chasm, and, walking over to this, I looked down. It seemed to be the entrance

to another cave and had a terrible steep, slippery path leading down to it. But the upper view was enough for me. Then I went back to gaze once more for my friends.

And now I heard the stairs beginning to creak, and the people who had gone down come in view. They was panting and puffing and red in the face, but they was all pleased with what they had seen. As for me, I was quite content, now that my friends was all back, with hearing and not seeing.

"And did the 'Woman in White' appear to you?" says I, low, to Dominie.

"Nary a woman!" he answered back, in the same way; "seeing as she couldn't coax you down, I suppose she slipped out of sight."

It was now pretty near time for us to start home, which we did after looking over some fishes and sea animals they kept in a little house farther down the shore on the bluff, and taking a glance at the Witches' Cauldron, where the spray rises fifty feet in the air sometimes. We had already looked at the Devil's Slide. Well, he better slide.

Hezekiah tried to tell me, on the way to

San Diego, that that "Woman in White" was the figure in the rock at the opening of the cave, which the waters had sculptured in the shape of a woman by beating their waves against. The daylight showed the shape as you stood inside the cave and looked out; and it was this white light that had given her the name. Some more of Hezekiah's pleasantries, I suppose!

If our drive through Old Town had been thrilling in the daylight, it was weird by the light of the moon. Every house that was lying in ruins—and the moonlight shining on the crumbled-down white adobe only intensified the effect—seemed a fit habitation for unhappy spirits of the other world.

As we laid down on our couches to rest that night, in quiet and peaceful Coronado, I couldn't help but be glad that Hezekiah hadn't took any house down to La Jolla, for here we wasn't crowded together either in our dwelling places or in our bathing arrangements or on the beach. Each one could have a chance to develop individually.

It's well we all have our different likes; for if it were otherwise, there wouldn't be

enough of the same material to go around. Just suppose everybody wanted Ephraim, what would I do?

We intend to rest tomorrow, and then set forth once more. Next time we go to the San Diego Mission and the Ostrich Farm.

A couple of lines from a poem called "The Traveller" keeps running through my mind. I can almost hear Ephraim's voice repeat them:—

"But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct when all pretend to know?"

And that's the way I feel as we flit from point to point.

I ain't ashamed to confess I'm getting kind of homesick; and yet I ought to be content in such a place as beautiful Coronado.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XVII.

Coronado, California,
August 15th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

Before I come to California I always thought that things was kind of new in this part of the world; sort of a wild and woolly West territory. But I find that people point with proper pride to the age of things instead.

What led up to this remark was the remembrance of our trip, taken a few days since, to see the largest lemon orchard in the world and the oldest olive orchard in the United States. For more'n a century, them olive tree branches have answered every passing breeze, by waving gentle fingers to it, and the fruit has lent its weight to the message. And, by the way, Susanna, I wish you could eat an olive in its natural state. I know you don't like them cured, but what would you think if you could taste them off a tree? I couldn't help thinking of you when I first set teeth in them.

The vegetation, too, in California looks decidedly oriental. Great cactus trees, twelve or fifteen feet high, often greet the eye; and banana trees, though not holding the fruit till it ripens, is not an unusual sight. Umbrella trees, thick and shady, afford an agreeable shelter from the hot sun, and pampas grass grows to a remarkable height.

In fact, every kind of growth is prodigal. Common geraniums grow up like climbing rose bushes, and attain a height of several feet; heliotropes run up till they cover the porch roof, and ivy geraniums wind around the trunks of palms—the leaves of which are sawed off as the palm grows higher and higher—so that the trunk comes to look like the outside of a pineapple, till they measure fifteen feet or more from the ground.

Though the country is newer than the East, all these things give it an old and settled look.

As for the climate, it is pretty nigh perfect. You would think, being in Southern California, that the heat in summer would be unendurable. It's just the reverse; for it's the most delightful place anyone could spend a summer vacation in. This is due

to the combination of ocean and mountain breezes which blow on one from all around.

The only thing to be criticized about it is that it is pretty much the same all the year around. This makes the seasons run into each other so, that, not taking account of where one stops and another begins, all the years spent here seem like so many days; virtually like a tale that is told. You ain't aware of the flight of time.

When Hezekiah mentioned we was to go to see some ostrich birds, to a farm, I immediately made up my mind that here I should be to home, and I quite reckoned on it.

"P'rhaps," I thought, "the farmer's wife will get us up a real good meal of victuals, such as we do for visitors in Vermont."

But why these farmers should just set down contented to look after birds, instead of doing some manful work, such as raising hay, oats, potatoes or beans, I couldn't make out. Still, I was learning to be broad-minded, and I thought that maybe the farmer was dead, and his wife couldn't do nothing else.

I had expected Hezekiah to make towards some big red farm-houses on a hill, with barns

and outstanding buildings. If there was grazing horses and cows, it would look even more like home. It wouldn't be amiss, neither, I thought, to hear the squeal of a few pigs and note some hogs ready for the market.

But I wish you could see the place we did draw up to! Going towards it, we swung past the High School and the University, out to the end of the road overlooking Mission Valley, which was a beautiful sight. Just before we reached the edge of the cliff overlooking this fertile and well-cultivated dale, we stopped before a building with a fence running around a big piece of ground.

"And where's the farm?" says I.

"Right here," says Hezekiah, "where they keep in stock the most birds of any ostrich farm in California. The largest one of the United States is in Arizona, but that is a long way off. We're glad to be able to visit the oldest of any such institutions in the country in our own state."

They have so many kinds of birds in California, that I hadn't give particular attention to the name "ostrich" when Hezekiah spoke it. It had vaguely gone through my

mind as a species of some kind peculiar to this climate, but it's really a fact that I hadn't connected fancy feathers in my mind with the name of this new bird now brought to view.

"It isn't possible that you haven't heard of these ostrich farms, Aunt Phoebe!" exclaimed Hezekiah, when he see I acted kind of quiet on the subject. As he prepared to hitch the horses, the others walking on ahead, he says:

"You know that ostriches are called in Africa, their home, the feathered camel. They live on the desert or the open plains and never visit mountainous districts unless pursued by hunger. They are so swift, when hunted, that even a horse can't overtake them, and a single stroke from the leg of the bird is able to break a thigh bone in a man. Though both male and female birds have black feathers, only the male carries the white feathers which are so much prized by you ladies."

By this time we had come up with Lucy Jane and Dominie, who was waiting at the store door for us. If the farmer *was* dead,

his wife meant to run a business along with showing her stock of birds! At least, that was my first thought, but I had underestimated the goodness of her heart. This I see by a sign on the glass window, which read: "Send an ostrich plume as a souvenir to your Eastern friends."

Now wasn't that clever of her? Of course we could help ourselves to all we wanted, but to think she should be so thoughtful of the friends we had left behind us! I felt doubly interested in making the widow's acquaintance.

So in we filed, Lucy Jane taking the lead. The poor woman had been so anxious to do all she could to make other people pleased and happy that she had got glass cases together in which to arrange the feathers of her birds. To think of our *selling* feathers back East, while here they was not only give away to the visitors who come to see her, but you was requested to send one to an Eastern friend as a souvenir of your visit! To cap it all, she had even colored them different shades, so as to please every fancy.

I kind of wanted to stop and take my

pick then—and as to sending one to an Eastern friend, of course I had only you in mind—but Hezekiah said we would look at the birds first.

So we passed outdoors into a great place where was regular yards made of chicken-coop wire for every two or three birds. And such birds! They was like animals. Their necks was long, thin, almost bare, and arched like the pictures of giraffes; they had long, stout legs with only two toes. But the most wonderful was their bodies. These was just covered with plumes, and every once in a while they spread their tails, something like a peacock, and showed them to advantage.

After we had looked at them sufficient, of all ages and sizes, from the largest, which stood about ten feet high, to the eggs being hatched in an incubator, we went back into the show-room. I made up my mind to attend to business!

It ain't often you get such a chance to supply your next winter's hat, and that of your neighbor's for nothing, as now fell to my share. So I looked them over critical, and so did Lucy Jane and Hezekiah.

Then I made up my mind which two I wanted, and pointing to them through the glass of the show-case, I says:

"I'll take them two black ones right there!" And they was two of the finest and longest plumes in the case.

The young lady seemed to take them out with a look of great satisfaction on her face. Just before she laid them in the box, Hezekiah walked over where I was.

"Investing, Aunt Phoebe?" says he.

Then, catching sight of the plumes the young lady was just laying in the boxes, he give a low whistle. Of course I thought he felt I had been kind of greedy in taking two, but didn't they ask you to take an extra one as a souvenir for your friend in the East? So, looking up at him kind of timid, I says:

"Do you think it's too much?"

"Why, Aunt Phoebe," says he, looking pleasant at me, "you know the limit of your own pocketbook best. But I should think, since you don't patronize society doings very much, that fifty dollars could be spent to better advantage than in buying two ostrich plumes!"

You can believe me, Susanna, for you know my saving spirit, I nearly dropped! Twenty-five dollars for each of them feathers that was set forth as being *souvenirs*, and I had paid only ninety-eight cents for the one that I wore for four years, and which you said was so pretty!

Now, honest, Susanna, between you and me, what do you suppose their idea of the word "souvenir" is in this part of the country? At school, we learned it meant a present or a remembrance of an occasion—in California it means a scandalous amount of money which they wrench out of you under false pretenses.

By this time the feathers was reposing in state in them boxes, and the young lady was just about to wrap the paper around them. But I cleared my throat and says:

"I've just remembered that my husband is special set against black feathers, and in fact, any kind or color of plumes. So I guess we'll call that order off!"

Hezekiah turned away laughing, and the young lady looked kind of flushed. But she had her plumes and I had my money, so I

didn't see there was anything to complain of.

But it was different with Lucy Jane. She bought and paid for a very beautiful black one for herself, and a white one for Angelina. As I turned to walk over to where she was, I see my nephew say something to her quietly and look at me. When I reached them, she had just picked up another beautiful plume. Then she turned around and says:

"This one is for you from Hezekiah and me, Aunt Phoebe, if you will have it!"

Have it! I was rejoiced at such a prospect, and I guess they see the pleasure in my face. Was there ever a woman, down deep in her heart, that didn't love pretty things?

So the girl begun wrapping it up. Looking at her now, for the first time, I see it was the same one that I had lately told my partner was set against feathers! She was smiling all around her mouth, but she kept her eyes down.

Shortly after this we left the Farm and turned our faces towards San Diego Mission. It was still in the forepart of the afternoon, having started early in the morning from Coronado. We had ate our dinner and our

horses had also had their stint of oats and hay, so we was all refreshed and ready for any extra excursioning. Hezekiah proposed an expedition to us.

It seems that he had had, at one time, a very bright young man in a high position in his store, who, coming from an unfortunate ancestry, had been took insane. This young man had been sent to an asylum in San Diego, and, as Hezekiah felt a strong attachment still to him, he proposed to us to visit him before going home. So all agreeing, we set out to see the young man.

Arriving at the place of confinement of this unfortunate being, we was shown into a big square room. Hezekiah asked for Mr. Ingram, and the attendant said that he thought that, though the patient was kind of tricky, he could be seen. Hezekiah's always thoughtful, so he asked me if I would like to go with him. Of course I was ready, for I believe in keeping both eyes wide open, since it's the only way provided by nature to see all sides of life. So it was decided that Dominie and I should keep with Hezekiah, and Lucy Jane sit in the parlor.

We entered a large, well-lighted room, and Hezekiah stood quietly in the door, looking at the inmates and trying to pick out Mr. Ingram. I stood just at his elbow, absorbed in the sight which presented itself to view.

There was people in all positions and dress, engaged in different pastimes. I see one man that had his coat on with the back to the front, and his collar turned back side foremost. He had a bow of pink ribbon tied on the back of his neck and a sash around his waist. One leg of his pants was turned up careful to his knee, and tied with a cherry-colored satin ribbon. The other leg was tied from the knee down with green, blue and yellow ribbon.

This was the man that now come forward, and going up to Hezekiah turned his back, shaking hands with him so. Then he turned his face to him.

"I never thought the devil would make me in this shape," says he. "But," speaking low, and leaning forward, "I got these ribbons in without his seeing them, as a remembrance of the life I led up there in your store." And he laughed loud and long.

I tell you, Susanna, the chills was taking me so that I was shivering. I felt like dropping on my knees and thanking the Lord for my reason. But Mr. Ingram, now kind of getting hold of events a little better, quieted down, and he and Hezekiah talked long and earnest.

I stood still a little distance off, thinking. Do you know, when you sift it down, Susanna, that every one of our minds is a little world in itself that must hang in the right balance to the little worlds in other people about us, to insure our sanity?

The more you think of this little world inside us, the more wonderful it seems. That's the place we live in, instead of the United States or any other country. The views of that world govern every outside world. There is the place in which we learn to love, to hate, to pity, to despise; and the decisions of that world govern our actions to our fellowmen in the outside world. I suppose that's the reason certain worlds swing together, determining friendships like certain stars. They just must go together, being drawn so by magnetic attraction. Separate them, and the

whole system of harmony is disturbed, and they go shooting around through the universe like vagrant stars. They can't do any particular work because their time is took up looking for them they belong to.

Such thoughts going through my mind made me kind of unconscious of where I was. All of a sudden I felt myself grasped firm from behind, and then two arms go around me, hugging me close. Looking up, I see a maniac looking down into my eyes! My limbs grew stiff, and I almost fainted from terror. But I knew the worst thing was for me to show any fright. Then the lunatic, having me in his embrace, says in a fulsome voice:

"My own sister Liz! I thought you had forgot me, it's been such a long time since you was here! And how is Tabby and the babies; have they forgot their loving uncle? But I've got you now!" And his arms grew tighter and tighter around me.

Something must be done quick. So I says, guessing at a name:

"Sure, Ben, I'm so glad to see you again! I'll tell you all about Tabby and the babies,

"My own sister, Liz! I thought you had forgot me."

who would have come with me if they could. But it's so hot, let's sit down."

"I don't want to let you go!" says he, hugging tight all the time, "I'm afraid you'll leave me again!"

"I've never such a thought!" says I, looking up loving into his face, while deathly chills was shaking my inards. "I've tried too hard to get here. I'm going to stay all the afternoon, so let's sit down, over there by the door, and talk about Tabby and the babies, who are getting cuter every day."

He seemed to believe me, for he reluctantly released me, and walked beside me to take a seat by the door.

We sat down, him facing me. I tried the dodge of asking him to get me a fan, but it didn't work. His glaring eyes kept watch of every movement. I thought if Hezekiah would only turn around, he might help me; but he didn't. Then I decided to try a new tack:

"Yes," says I, clearing my throat, "the babies ain't been at all well, but their mother sent you a little present which I left in the room downstairs. I'll get it for you!" I

continued, rising up with a bound and making a dash for the door.

But he was quick, too. He sprang after me, hollering:

"No you don't! You tried that dodge on me once before!"

But I did. I got outside the door and yanked it to after me, just as he reached it. I knew what he would do, and my active brain planned the campaign. I held it just as long as I possibly could—then I let it go sudden!

The inevitable happened. With the quick opening of the door, he fell backwards onto the floor, and I made a headlong plunge for the stairs. Down I jumped, three or four steps at a time, for I hadn't got only about halfway down when I heard his snorting anger behind me as he issued forth into the hall.

As I swung past the reception room where Lucy Jane was sitting, I called:

"Come on, Lucy Jane! The whole shooting match is after us! They've all broken loose and are coming on the run!"

With that she too give a bound for the door, and joined the retreating army. I never

saw her stir herself so before, but now she was fully alive to the occasion. She run like a two-year-old colt. We landed together, with one bound, at the bottom of the stairs on the first floor!

Then we made a dash for the street. Fortunately, there was a store next door, and for the door of this I rushed, Lucy Jane in the rear. In the back of their window there was a green curtain hung as a background for their goods, and behind this we hid. The storekeeper looked askance at us, but we didn't have no time to offer explanations. In a minute, no one following us from without, I opened the curtains in the middle, cautious, and peeked out. Then Lucy Jane stood on her tiptoes and looked over my shoulder, but all was quiet. We kept peeking out, from time to time, till Hezekiah and Dominie appeared to view, looking up and down the street for us. Then we tremblingly showed ourselves.

When Hezekiah see us, he laughed and says:

"Well, you're great women to leave us in such a place alone."

Then he says to me: "It's too bad you were so frightened, Aunt Phoebe, and I don't know as I blame you. That man had escaped from his overseer, but he was overtaken on the first landing. You have had lots of fright for nothing."

I tell you, I was glad in my soul when we reached home in safety that night, though I see them lunatics dancing around my bed, trying to get after me, through all the hours of darkness.

Well, such is life, experiences crowding in so fast, and impressions as well, that you can't begin to set them down. But I think my curiosity is fully satisfied for all time in connection with lunatics.

You may wonder, me not saying anything about it, if we have heard much from Angelina since we have been here. We have heard frequent, always some allusion to Mr. Grey, too, and that worries me. But nary a syllable about Mr. Earlham. Of course, from this distance, I can't tell why, unless it is to please her pa and ma. I haven't any doubt that when I reach home she'll show me some of them fine letters she's got from Mr. Earlham.

I suppose my next letter will be to you after we have started home, for we calculate to take our time going, as we did coming, on a different route.

As it is about time for harvesting to home in Vermont, I suppose you'll be having various gatherings such as apple bees and raisings, as is the custom.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TEMECULA, CALIFORNIA,
September 5th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

You know my long-dreaded fear—the Indians! I had been scared, ever since I crossed the desert, of seeing them red men before I got back to Vermont. I have not only seen them, but actually had to talk with them, and not only that, but *sleep* among them! Your eyes may well grow big with horror as you read this.

But before I tell you about them critters, I want to go back in my story a little.

The morning we was to leave Coronado, we rose early; for we had heaps to do. Then I had to take leave of the ocean, as I didn't expect to see it again before starting for Wayneville.

So I went down to bid it good-bye, and I went alone. I had, somehow, got very much attached to the conversation of that water. Maybe the unbelieving don't credit you can

have companionship with Nature, same as you can with human beings, but I ain't one of these. I think there's a terrible lot of company in the presence of woods, ocean, trees, fields, flowers and everything that grows.

I had taken heaps of comfort in sitting down on the beach by myself, forgetting every human being around me, and listening to what that ocean told me. Because we didn't have the same language, I couldn't tell everything it said, but as near as I could make out, it told me about the shores of other countries it washed, and the people who there come down to look upon it; of the scenes of joy and sorrow it sees from day to day; of the fish in its depths, and the story of the ships and the sailors upon its bosom. The only part of the story I didn't like to hear was of its gales and tempests and lost lives.

When I reached the part of the beach I had sat on most frequent through the summer, I found it occupied by another woman.

Ain't that often the way, when you want to be alone someone else pops right up beside you? But I tried to make the best of

it; and p'rhaps it was better so! If I had been alone, and seen the waves breaking away from the main swell of the body, to break in independent billows, like children leaving their mother to start families of their own, I might have felt kind of sad. The white foam kissing up the sands of the beach, and then running back to be lost in that terrible expanse of water again, with no probability of my ever talking with it any more, would certainly have made me regretful. It would seem as though I had been given a chance to see one of the most wonderful works of God, and then had to bid it good-bye to run back again into the swell of human life, where all was turbulent and ill at ease.

But maybe the other woman had come to bid it good-bye, too. So I sat down beside her. She looked at me with great dark eyes, kind of sorrowful ones, it seemed to me, and sort of smiled.

"Ocean looks beautiful this morning," I ventured.

She kind of smiled once more, nodded her head, and looked up to the sky. But what she said startled me:

"Yes, I have two boys and three girls!"

Now who said anything about children? But I thought maybe she meant she was sorry to leave them. So I made up my mind to humor her.

"How old are they?" says I, kindly.

"The band does play beautiful!" she answered with animation.

"Goodness massy," I thought, "it's another lunatic—" And I looked wildly along the beach for help. But nary a one was in sight. Just suppose she should suddenly become excited over something, and begin to tussle with me. I remembered the strength of that man in the asylum, and no knowing but what she might exhaust all my strength and then throw me into the ocean! Evidently I must do nothing to excite her.

As soon as I could, I edged a little farther off, but now she seemed to want to talk, and she followed me up. So I see I must keep her pleasant and entertained till someone hove in sight, and then change places with them. Sort of a "puss in the corner" arrangement, you see, only I wanted to be the one that was left out next time. I acted

as natural as though I was sitting down to a morning talk with you.

"Have you attended many of the band concerts?" I asked, in response to the last remark.

"I believe it's going to rain early this year," she says, seemingly greatly interested.

"I shouldn't wonder," I observed, though I didn't know a thing about weather indications in California.

It didn't seem any use to ask questions, for they wasn't answered. But I knew it would be terrible dangerous to stop talking. And all the time I was looking out of the side of my eye for someone to take my place. Then I hurried on to think of something else.

"Have you been here long?" I asked.

"There are three churches in town that I know of," she answered, as though she was giving me information I was anxious for.

Just then an old man with white hair and brisk step come along on the board walk above us. We was sitting quite a way down on the beach. And that man must come to my rescue somehow!

I had one of Ephraim's big white handkerchiefs in my pocket. I grabbed this out and unfurled it to the breeze, then I jumped to my feet and waved it furious to the man. The woman looked kind of surprised, but that didn't count at all. Then she seemed to have made up her mind.

"Your husband?" says she.

I didn't answer her out and out, but only smiled and kept on signalling my one hope. It took effect, for he jumped off the board walk onto the sand and ploughed through it to us.

"Can I be of any assistance to you, madam?" says he, with his hat in his hand.

"Indeed you can!" says I. "I've lost something that I can't afford to very well, so if you'll go in that direction and look, I'll go in t'other." And I started off at full speed, leaving him to be the prey in my place.

Though he called after me, asking what it was I had lost, I didn't have no time to turn around and answer; it was too hard work to get through that sand when you're in a hurry. So I called back:

"You just hunt till you find it, I've got an engagement!" and I never turned back to see how my substitute was getting on.

I hadn't got out of sight of the beach when I met a young woman walking hurriedly along. Seeing me, she stopped and says:

"Pardon me, but have you seen a lady on the beach this morning? Mother is quite deaf, so, though I have called all along, as far as I have gone, I haven't been able to make her hear."

Then it struck me all to once—the woman was only deaf.

"Indeed I have," says I. "And you'll find her just a short way back, talking with an old gentleman!"

"That's just like mother," says the young woman, laughing, "though she can't hear hardly a word, she enjoys talking more than anything else in the world!" And she hurried on.

I don't need to tell you I was relieved. Well, the good-bye to the ocean was more sudden than I had meant it to be; but time was getting short, and they would be waiting for me to home.

When I got back to the house, my party was waiting, and we soon started.

So over hills and dales we travelled once more. With our faces turned homewards, the thought of Angelina was very prominent in my mind. I did hope all would shortly come out well with them love affairs towards which we was drawing nearer with every mile.

Hezekiah was rested and jolly; Lucy Jane was more give up than ever to her unbounded belief in the efficacy of her Science; Dominie was fat and saucy; and I was on the alert to learn all I could to take home to Ephraim and you. So this was our wagon load.

We drove right merrily along, and no idea of danger come in my mind, for I hadn't heard that we was to cross any more Indian passes. And so we went on; passing curious landmarks, wonderful formations of stone on the hills and beside the roads, uphill and down, past canyons and flourishing farms.

I've always heard tell that a calm comes before a storm, and this was our calm. But the storm was gathering with every minute;

only I didn't happen to notice the clouds forming.

It begun to sprinkle, as it were, when Hezekiah spoke of stopping over night at a Mission Reservation. It burst in full force when he said it was an Indian one! This was after we had been out a few days. I immediately went on a strike!

"No, no!" says I to Hezekiah, "you can't make *me* sleep among the Indians! It's all you can do to keep your scalp on when you're awake; but what would it be if they could steal in upon you when your senses was gone!"

"But," says Hezekiah, "there's no place else for us to stop, Aunt Phoebe, and really the Indians are entirely peaceable. Why, the whole United States government would be after them if they should do us any harm!"

"And what good would that do after we was dead?" says I. "No, no, Hezekiah, there's no use to argue with me. My scalp's on now, and I intend to keep it. I'm really very fond of this mortal coil, and I don't intend to uncoil yet!" Saying which, I appealed to Lucy Jane.

That Christian Science of hers keeps her calm through most everything, I'll give it credit for that—except when the lunatics take after her.

"Lucy Jane," says I, "how can you have the heart to back Hezekiah up in taking us all to be murdered? Ain't you got any desire to see Angelina once more?"

"Aunt Phoebe," says Lucy Jane, calmly, "you seem to forget that any circumstance in life is powerless to produce suffering unless you allow illusion to take possession of your mind."

"Goodness gracious!" says I, desperate in my inability to make that woman see the truth; "do you reckon it'll be an illusion when them Indians execute their war dance around us, in their blankets and feathers, with their faces all painted and their knives brandishing in the air?"

By this time I was really shaking, I was so scared, for Hezekiah kept right on going, getting nearer and nearer them Indians.

"I beg of you not to be frightened," says Lucy Jane, kindly, "for it will make you ill."

But continue we did, for I couldn't make

no one believe that we was in immediate danger. But, of course, my peace of mind was gone.

Language almost fails me as I attempt to describe this part of the trip to you. I declare I almost forgot the existence of Indians for awhile.

Ahead opened a vista of shrubbery and wild flowers, banked up on either side of the road. Through the leaves of the tall, graceful branches of the trees, the sunbeams danced on the ground beneath, making a checkered path for our horses' feet. The road was a winding one, and every new scene opened to us, as we turned one of these curves, led to fresh exclamations of delight from our party.

On one side, a little farther on, were the most wonderful boulders, in fantastic arrangement, shelving out from the side of the hill, that I ever see. They looked as though they was surely going to fall from their places in front of the horses' feet, as we come to them, but when we arrived they was as solid as the mountain itself. Back of these jutting boulders was a mountain that

looked as though it had been built by Indian hands. It was all of stone, from top to bottom, with a little earth here and there mixed in. And then, looking off in t'other direction, as we turned another curve, was mountains lying, a soft purple, in the distance, with a valley of wondrous beauty at their base. As I said awhile back, I wish I had the power to write a book on the beauty and uniqueness of Southern California scenery and life!

But we was going on. The Indians was getting nearer! And my heart sank with a dull thud as it all come rushing upon me at the inward suggestion that this might be the last view of this earth that these faded blue eyes would ever look upon.

We had now come to one of the wildest and loneliest parts of the road, and my heart was going at a pretty good pace, for at the side was thick shrubbery that would be an ideal ambush for any band of Indians. I almost expected to see their wild eyes looking out through the leaves, as they squatted to their task of arrowing us to our depth.

The trees was thick, and the undergrowth

dense; the tree-toads and crickets was croaking—for it was late in the afternoon, and a soft light was beginning to fall over nature while the sky was beginning to mix a soft yellow tone among its purples and blues.

All of a sudden, a little distance ahead, come the figure of an Indian brave (!) on horseback. Nary a dwelling in sight, and only one pistol between us all, and Hezekiah not inclined to use that! But on he come. The Indians have always been noted for riding good horses, when they could get them, and this one had got hold of such.

"Who knows," I thought, with a tightening of the cords in my throat, "what white man used to gallop on the back of this one, nor how soon Laddie and Lassie will be ridden also in such wise?"

But I hadn't been idle while these thoughts was surging through my mind. I had all the hairpins but two out of that back switch of my hair, and it was pretty near ready to hand him! It certainly would be by the time he came up to the wagon.

Just at this point Lucy Jane turned round to look at me, seeing I was having some

trouble, somewhere, on the back of my head. Then she says, gasping:

"For goodness' sakes, Aunt Phoebe, what *are* you doing?"

"What you might wish now in your soul you was able to," says I, working fast and holding the hairpins in my mouth, "getting my hair ready to hand over to the Indian approaching, so he'll see there's no necessity for using his knife on *this* scalp. May the Lord save the rest of you!"

"If you have any regard for the rest of us," says Lucy Jane excitedly, "you'll put your hair right back in place and leave it there!"

"I've no doubt such is your wish," says I, still working, trying to get the end of that last pin, "but I can't consent to sign my own death warrant. I was elected not to be scalped by wearing this false hair, and here it is!" says I, triumphantly, as the last pin slipped out and it fell off into my hand.

But Lucy Jane, seeing that the young Indian was so near, give my hand a knock, which sent the hair falling onto the floor. It was kind of mean of her, wasn't it?

Before I could reach for it, the dreaded foe had come up, and run his horse up onto the side hill. So I dived for that hair quick, and while I was getting it, I looked at him and bowed and smiled and says:

"I'm getting my hair for you as fast as I can!" But he only took off his hat and with another whirl of that animal down into the road again, says:

"No sabe!"

My face, I know, was blanched with fear, and I sat back trembling. For I was sure that he had only gone a round-about way to tell the rest to prepare for our coming. And yet Hezekiah was determined to go on!

I never see anybody so reckless in my life as Hezekiah, for he wasn't one bit scared. He only laughed and says:

"Why, Aunt Phoebe, he only said, in Spanish—which many of these Indians speak—'I don't understand.'"

Still, we was drawing nearer and nearer to that Reservation, where we would have not one Indian, but a hunderd to combat with! And one or two more turns in the road brought us in sight of it!

As we entered the place, my eyes took in every detail. It looked like a little world set off by itself. There was rows upon rows of little houses, of only two rooms, fenced about with a garden allowed to each. There was in all about half a dozen streets, all lined with these government dwellings. At the far end of the place was the familiar sight of an old Mission, with bells, and near it a Government House with the American flag a-floating from the top.

"The Lord be blessed for that!" says I, when I saw it, "for it shows that there may be American people in the place who will help us put up a fight when the time comes."

Hezekiah drove first to the Government House. Here we was met with the information that there wasn't a speck of room for visitors! Then we tried the house where lived the teacher, supplied by the government, and she said her house was full, even to laying on the floor of her scholars; and no more could possibly be taken in! From this interview Hezekiah come back to us to know what to do.

The night was near to falling; there was

no hotel or boarding-house in the place; we was sitting out in the chill of an approaching night, in a carriage set down among weird-looking hills over which the shades was creeping, and Indians! Don't it sound interesting?

"Let me go and see the lady," says I to Hezekiah, "now that you have done your best. It's mighty sure we can't sit out of doors all night!"

So I travelled round to her back door, hearing the noise come from that direction.

I see the object of my concern standing at the point I was making for. When I come up to her, I says:

"Madam, you ain't calculating to leave us outdoors to the mercy of the Indians all night, be you? We *must* have a night's lodging and two square meals. I am the wife of an elder in the Presbyterian church back East, and if you do your duty, when I get home I'll have the women send a box of clothing from the missionary society to your Indians. If not—" and my looks was full of expression.

Whether it was the missionary box or the

call to the blood in her veins from her own nationality, I can't tell, but she said:

"Indeed, I'm sorry for you, but I haven't an inch of room."

Then she called to one of her Indians and said a whole lot in some kind of outlandish gibberish. Thereafter she communicated the following:

"Peachago says that Seralo, an Indian woman who helps me in the school, has a house that she rents by the night to strangers, and that you can take your meals with her."

"Among the Indians!" I says aghast.

"There is not the slightest danger," says she; "we Americans—there are four of us—live here all the time, and are never molested. But that is the very best and the only place that there is to stay for the night."

Accordingly, I communicated the knowledge to the rest of my party waiting for me.

Now a young American man come up to the carriage and says: "I will show you the way to the house of the Indian woman, if you like!" And we was very grateful to him, for a place we must have.

In a few minutes we drove up the street a ways and stopped in front of one of them two-room houses, and begun to unload our wagon. As we was doing this a big, thick-set Indian come up to take care of the horses. But before Hezekiah turned the outfit over to his care, I stepped into the little concern where we was to keep vigil with the hours of darkness—at least I was, for I knew I wouldn't sleep a wink among our foes.

This little house was divided by a wooden partition right through the middle, with an opening at the top for circulation of air. There was also two windows on each side of the house and a front and back door.

I went first to the windows and tried them, to see if they could be opened from the outside; and found that they would be hard to raise if they was shut tight. Then I tried the keys in both doors, to see if they would lock all right. The one in the back door would, but the other wouldn't. This I see through immediate. They was planning to have everything look secure, and lull our fears to rest, and then begin their work!

Hezekiah and Lucy Jane took the front

room—without any key; and Dominie and I took the back room.

We was to go to the fourth house below us for our supper. The time soon arrived to set forth, but I intended to make all safe first. So I walked into Hezekiah's room, by his leave, and pushed the bed up against the door, so they couldn't open that. Then I prevailed upon Lucy Jane to let me light the lamps; and next I got out newspapers and pinned them up inside the windows from top to bottom. Then we started forth to partake of Indian cooking.

We soon arrived at the house of Seralo, the Indian woman who acted as hotel keeper on a small scale. At supper the rest ate hearty, but it was very necessary that one shouldn't be overcome by any of their Indian herbs that they had most probably mixed in the cooking, to steal our senses. So, though I was hungry, I was philosopher enough to abstain from such fleshly lust.

The Indian woman, who had prepared a nice-looking meal in a real neat house, stood looking at us as we set at table, I suppose to see how her medicine was going to work.

I won't say but what she was better-looking than I ever thought an Indian could be, for she was. She had a real pleasant face, and smiled á good deal—a rare thing for an Indian. Looking at me, she said in broken English:

"You no like meal? I cook him myself."

"You disgraceful woman!" says I, aghast, to that imperturbable Indian female. "You cooked him yourself; and who, may I have the audacity to ask, did the killing? How can you have the stomach to dish out human beings to eat?"

But she didn't understand, or pretended not to, but kept right on smiling at me!

On the way back I picked up a cobblestone. Dominie asked me if that was to crack someone on the head with, but I didn't give him no answer. I had my own designs.

When we got into the house, I looked first for some muffins and cheese that had been left from our lunch, for I hadn't ate a thing at that Indian woman's house, and filled the aching void with that supply. Then I set to work to secure our safety for the night. I took some of them rusty nails out of my pocket,—those I always carry for good luck

—and with the cobblestone in the other hand, sent them whacking into the door, to make it strong against the onslaught of the Indians. Then I got Hezekiah to let me take charge of the pistol—though I'd never fired one off in my life.

After the rest had gone to bed, I took my chair and sat its back up to the door and myself down in it. Then I laid the pistol across my lap and took up my book to read to while away the dreary time. There I sat, grim and determined, unconscious Dominie's eyes was on me.

Pretty soon he said, sitting up in bed, and looking scared, pointing to the slats over the door:

"As sure as you live, Aunt Phoebe, there's an Indian looking in them slats!"

"A *which?*" says I, jumping like a gun had been pointed at me, and pretty nearly knocking the lamp over in my excitement.

"Be you there?" I shouted up at the slats. "Well, you hike back to your friends with this message: Phoebe Ann's going to sit up all night and has this house just loaded with pistols and powder, waiting for you!"

That Indian must have got down without making a sound, for I never heard a breath. Dominie didn't seem special scared, and only laughed with his head under the sheet. Pretty soon he went to sleep as quiet and contented as a little kitten.

The hours dragged on, and my eyes begun to get heavy. Driving in the open air is wonderful for making you sleepy. But I got up and washed them with cold water, and settled myself with my book again.

I never was so glad to see the dawn in my life as I was that morning. I was pretty well exhausted, but I had saved the scalps of the entire party!

The family was horrified when they found I hadn't been to bed all night long, and seemed to think everything would have been all right if I had slept as they had. How little they knew!

When we finally shook off the dust of the town, the last view of which was rows and rows of corn in husk hung out on lines to dry for making tamales, I give a great sigh of relief. I won't say but what I was interested in the round earthen dishes they used

a stone pestle to crush the corn in, but I wasn't sorry to leave any part of the life, though it was novel, that I saw around me. I was certainly surprised that I hadn't seen any Indians with blankets and feathers on.

We struck out boldly for Temecula, over a four-mile up-hill climb over the mountain and as far down on the other side. Even the passing desire of Hezekiah's to visit some mines near Pala, in which was found chalcedony, beryl, and turquoise, was no hindrance to my enthusiasm to once more feel myself a free being out of the clutches of the Indians.

After we had gone over the mountain I just mentioned, which was really very wild and romantic, we come to a piece of picturesque forest road that was ideal. The great immense trees, with their big trunks, looked as though they had stood there for centuries. Just the dim shadowy light that is over the face of nature in such places illuminated the mosses and ferns, rocks and wild growth around us. The sight struck a vein in my nature that was very reverential, just as though we might convert such a spot into

a tabernacle and kneel to pray to the Spirit dwelling therein. I believe it was just such sights that produced the religious belief in man found in primeval people.

Hezekiah says we shall drink of life-giving mineral springs at the next place we stop. There we shall look upon Lake Elsinore, set as a gem among the hills.

Thank the Lord, we'll soon be in Los Angeles, where there'll be no more bridges to cross. I shan't say but what I will be glad to cross the one that separates me from my partner and you, for I shall always be

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XIX.

LAKE ELSINORE, CALIFORNIA,
September 10th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

When we left Temecula, we drove along a fine road, almost like a boulevard, until we come in sight of Lake Elsinore. There are mountains all around us here, and at their base lies this beautiful calm lake. It was like arriving in Heaven, in comparison to our experiences of the last few days.

In order to reach the hotel overlooking the lake, we had to drive on the shore of the water for about a mile. Then we procured rooms on the lake side of the hotel. Can you wonder we sat down to rest?

And what a rest! I wonder if we'll realize, after our struggles of the earth are over and we're harbored at last, such a sense of relief as I did that I had really got clear of them Indians! I laid my head back on my chair and feasted my eyes on the calmness of the scene before me.

Water is scarce in the rivers here, in the summer, but it ain't in the lakes. That's the compensation of Nature—what one lacks the other makes up for.

I don't think you can accuse the letters I have sent you from California as being dry, but this promises to be an especially wet one, for the motto of this place is to soak yourself, inside and out, with fluid in the shape of mineral water.

The first place of acquaintance with this water was at a pump enclosed by an open summer-house. On the outside of this enclosure was the name "Hot Sulphur Springs," and a cup hanging by the pump invited everyone to help themselves.

It's no wonder they could give it away! It was the nastiest-tasting concoction I ever put to my lips; and yet they say people actually grow to like it! When Dominie tasted it, he says:

"Rotten eggs!" And though the rest of us wouldn't be so outspoken, we was glad for someone to give expression to our thoughts.

It seems that the longer you pump at the well, the hotter the drink gets. But we didn't

fiddle much of our time away here. We walked along a little farther and come to a big building which notified us it was a mineral bath. So in we walked.

There was a big tank full of the aforementioned material, and in its middle stood a man with both arms outstretched, trying to gain health from its contact with his body. He was the picture of death, with hollow eyes and sunken cheeks.

He was the sole occupant of the tank, and I shortly discovered something unheard of in the heavens above or the earth beneath. I now see why the man had stuck to the water.

The new discovery was—a *mud* bath! I looked at that sign; I spelt it out; I read it low to myself; and then I called the crowd. Think of it, Susanna, a *mud* bath! Here we have been fighting dirt through the rainy seasons all our life, and so afraid that mud would get tracked into our houses, while in another part of the country you was invited to divest yourself of your clothes and wallow in it!

I read all the theories it set forth. You

was first to wallow in the mire and clay, and then rest on a cot with a blanket. One hour you was to lie in such state—until you sweat. I laid the material up carefully in my mind for future meditation. As for mud—I didn't see why it was necessary to pay men to furnish you with that. All you had to do was to dip pails of water out of the lake and mix it with the dirt of the shore. The smallest child can make mud. The trouble comes in keeping them out of it. Human beings and mud certainly seem to have an affinity for each other.

After we returned to our hotel, I couldn't keep them mud baths out of my mind. The people furnishing them said that they was good for rheumatism, and all impurities of the system; and I wondered if they was. I made up my mind to try one!

But I hesitated on that dollar they wanted to be paid for them. A dollar is a terrible big amount to pay for mud, especially when you consider how many dollars we pay to fight shy of it. After all, there was no real reason why I shouldn't mix my own mud bath!

So the next day, when the rest of my party had gone out for a while, I begun to make arrangements to try some of Nature's remedy. I looked thoughtful at the bucket standing beside my washstand. It looked awful heavy to tote down to the lake, but I swung it by the handle and laid one of the quilts off the bed over the other arm. I was now fully equipped.

As I got down to the office, preparing to go out the front door, one of the men sitting there says to the clerk:

"Better look out for your goods; they're walking off!"

But I kept going straight ahead. Then the clerk looked up from his writing and come around to the front of the desk; but I had my hand on the knob of the door.

"Where are you going?" says he to me, walking in my direction.

"That don't happen to be any of your business!" says I. "If I wanted people to know that I should hang a placard on my chest. When I get good and ready I'll return this pail and quilt, and not before," and I closed the door behind me.

No one followed me. I suppose they thought if I didn't return, they could charge it up to Hezekiah.

I soon reached the shore of the lake, and then I walked rapidly along to a retired place.

I ran plump into a big row boat on the sand, turned upside down, with part of the bottom out. This was an ideal place for me to creep in, and lay on the hot sand, covered up with a quilt, till the pores of my body began to weep—and be out of sight.

So I set to work. First laying off my bonnet, and putting my quilt on the top of the boat, I fetched that bucket forth into position for instant use. Then I begun hunting for a stick to mix my mud. Some of the wild enthusiasm of childhood entered my veins as I found what I was in search for, and grabbing my bucket I started for the water. I felt like I used to when mother put a soiled dress on me and turned me loose to make mud pies. Now, after all these years, with no one looking on, I was really going to play in mud again! I hurried along as though I had been ten-year-old.

The first pailful of water from the lake I

landed in triumph beside the boat; and now I begun to wonder, for the first time, what I should mix my mud in. But I soon devised a plan. I dug a good hole in the dirt and sand and poured the water into it. Immediately the earth drank it up.

This was discouraging, but the next pailful left a little residue of water in the bottom of the hole, and the next more; pretty soon it was half full. Then I took both hands full of dirt and threw into it. Now it was getting interesting, and, after throwing more dirt, I took my stick and began mixing vigorous.

I was beginning to enjoy myself more than in any experience I'd had on the trip. All the years of my life was as naught, and I was again a care-free child to home with my mother to go to with my childish questions and perplexities. So I worked hard and gleeful till the mud was thick and ready for use.

Then I swung into the boat. I made up my mind I wouldn't take a bath all over at once, but only cover my face and hands and feet, to see how it worked. So, pushing my

head up through the hole made by the vacant slats, and in this wise sitting up, I removed my shoes and stockings.

Leaning out, I took a handful of mud out of that reservoir and slapped it on the top of one foot, and then I did likewise to the other one. Then, holding my eyes tight shut, I clapped a handful of that mud on one cheek, then on my forehead, then on the rest of my face. My next duty was to baptize both hands. I next drew the blanket into the improvised bath house and lay down.

The experience was novel; in fact it went ahead of any childhood scene I could call up. I begun to have such a funny sensation, too. The quilt made me terrible hot, and my flesh felt like it was drawing up in a pucker underneath that mud. I supposed, though, it was the minerals working in it and purifying my blood; for if all the rest of the water in the place was mineral, in all probability, the lake was too. Anyway, no one could look upon my disfigurement, and I had saved a dollar!

I was just beginning to feel drowsy, when I heard a boy's shout of glee, and my heart

"Ginger Crickets! What on earth are you up to now, Aunt Phœbe?"

sunk within me. It was Dominie finding my mud-pie pool! Springing onto the part of the upturned boat that was whole, he shouted:

"Come on, pa, here's a dandy place to rest!"

What was I to do? In another minute, boy-fashion, he might swing one foot into what he supposed was the empty boat, and land it smack on my upturned face! So I poked my head up through the opening.

With a wild yell, he give one spring onto the ground. Then, with a prolonged whistle, he says:

"Ginger crickets! What on earth are you up to now, Aunt Phoebe? Has the mineral water been too much for your head? I believe it's turned your brain!"

Just then I see one of the servants of the hotel running along the shore to overtake Hezekiah. When he had got up to him, he said something quite excited, and Hezekiah turned round and walked back with him. Seeing this, Dominie was inclined to go, too, but I interposed.

"Do stay with me, Dominie," I pleaded,

"and help me to get back to dinner in time. I'm so tuckered out getting this mud-bath that I feel as though I couldn't get that bucket and quilt back alone!"

"And is it a *mud-bath?*" says he, laughing till his face got red. "Aunt Phoebe, you're a regular lark in yourself."

But, la, he's only a boy, so I didn't pay no attention to him. I had more use for him than talk.

So I sent him to the lake for some water to wash the mud off; but it was hard stuff to get rid of; some of it had got into the pores and was bound to stay. In order to get it off my feet, I had to get out of the boat and rest them on the ground. And this sent Dominie off into another fit of laughter. But after awhile we was ready to set forth to our dinner, and I made him take his turn, this time, in swinging the bucket and carrying the quilt.

But I had had a mud-bath; and it had cost me nothing but some effort. I hoped it would do me good, though I felt terrible weak.

When we walked into the office of the hotel,

there was some new arrivals just registering their names. As we got near the desk, some of the ladies turned and looked at us. I had just taken the pail from Dominie, and I suppose this give rise to the remark which I now heard spoken low between two of the women:

"A new chambermaid, I suppose; but how funny they should allow her to come in the office in this style!"

A chambermaid! I set down that pail with a whack, and you can well imagine what I was going to say to her, when I caught sight of that nice little woman that had helped me onto the train at Jersey City when I started for California.

She come up to me with her hand outstretched, and I felt like hugging her. I says:

"How glad I be to see you again! I've just been having a mud-bath, and am returning the articles to the hotel rooms which me and my party are occupying."

"A *mud-bath!*" says the little sweet-faced woman in surprise. "I should think that would make one dirtier instead of cleaner!"

and she laughed a little low silvery laugh.

"You've got lots to learn yet, my dear, if you've just arrived in California," says I, with superior knowledge.

Looking at the others, I see they was all listening, even the clerk, and everyone was laughing. I think if I have a genius in any one direction it is to make those around me feel happy, for wherever I go they always see the bright side of things!

But I did hope I could return the favor this nice little woman had done me once; and I made up my mind to try. I asked her how long she was going to stay, and how she happened to come to California. She said she didn't know as to the first, it depended on the party she was with; and as to the second, a good opportunity offering itself had induced her to visit the country she had always wanted to see, and at the same time visit her only brother, whom she hadn't seen for a long time.

"And did you make it out?" says I.

"No, not yet," says she, "though I hope to before I go back East. When I got here I found he had gone to Europe on quick

notice, and the letter telling me of it had passed me on the way. But he is expected back soon, so I still hope to see him."

The party now went to the rooms assigned them, and I went to mine.

After dinner I hunted up my friend of the ferry-boat in the music room, where she was listening to the automatic piano, and asked her to go out for a walk with me. She seemed glad to renew the acquaintance, and we set forth.

As we walked around, she happened to mention her brother once more, of whom she seemed to think a pile.

"Tell me about your brother," says I, "for I'm very much interested."

"There's so much to tell," says she, brightly, "that I don't know where to begin. My brother is a great student, and is engaged in college work."

"Now that sounds interesting," says I, and I couldn't help thinking of Mr. Earlham. "Maybe your brother is studying for the ministry?"

"No," says she, with that same quiet little smile I had noted so long ago, "though

Anthony is of a religious trend of mind, he has not chosen the ministry. He is most interested in political economy, which he thinks is the cure-all for every adverse condition in life."

"Now ain't that funny," says I, "I know just such a character myself."

"Indeed, is that so?" says the little woman, "but to me there's only one character like Anthony's, for he is the most unselfish man I ever knew. To really appreciate him, one should know his life. This he will never divulge to anyone, for he says there is nothing remarkable about it. But there is."

"Then tell me," says I, "for I feel strangely drawn to this brother of yours."

"Anthony came out to California when he was only sixteen years of age," she commenced, "with an uncle who had traded some Eastern property for a Western ranch. It was hard for us to let him leave home, but I was married and father was doing well in business, and it was a great opportunity for the boy to see the country. Uncle's ranch did well, but he was ambitious for town property, so he changed the stock and

produce for a city home. Uncle was eager for greater riches and speculated in land. Just at the height of the boom the crash came. Property dropped in value, and men that were worth a half-million one day, were in debt to the extent of several thousand the next. Uncle was one of these. He lost all, and had to start again. By the time the property had come up once more, as California property is bound to do in time, he couldn't stagger to his feet to gain his old position. Then Anthony left his university studies, and worked through the day, sitting up half the night not to lose ground in his special ambition. Uncle seemed to lose heart from the time of his loss, and failed rapidly. Then Anthony took the whole responsibility of the burden upon himself."

"And didn't he break down under such a strain?" I asked.

"Not until part of the burden was removed from him," she answered. "When uncle died, and the place was disposed of, so that Aunt had a few thousand dollars, he fell sick with a nervous fever. It wasn't long after this that Aunt died, and he was then

left master of his actions. But troubles never come singly, and things had been happening to home. Father lost what money he had, and my husband was killed, leaving me only a pittance. Then he took up the new responsibility and sent his earnings to his parents—for Aunt had gone through with what she had before she died. This he continued to do till father got on his feet once more, and I had a legacy left to me. Through it all, he has studied and studied, and now gone to Europe to complete his course in his favorite subject. I am so glad the opportunity came to him," she ended up, with hope and love in her voice.

"And what's the name of your brother, besides Anthony?" I asked, more interested than I can tell.

"Earlham," says she.

I stopped stock still in the street and says:

"The Lord be praised! Ain't I glad to know you're his sister and he's your brother!"

"Why, you don't know Anthony, do you?" says she, with a little cry of joy.

"Know him?" says I. "Well, I should say so, and what's more, I think more of him

than of any other man in the world outside my own relations, which I hope sometime he'll be," I added, now grown bold.

"Why, you ain't *Aunt Phoebe*, are you?" says she, a light breaking over her face.

"The very same," says I, "and I hope you can call me so in reality some day. For if he can get Angelina Colwell for a wife, it'll be full compensation for what he's had to go through. She's just as wonderful a woman as he is a man!"

"I believe it," says she, with conviction, "if all that Anthony has written about her is true. But he always speaks so reverential of her that I don't think he has allowed himself any selfish thoughts in regard to the matter. He only speaks of an ideal friendship he has contracted with a young woman. In fact, he has the same as said that she is to be given to another, and he is thanking God for the privilege of knowing her while he can have uninterrupted intercourse with her."

"That sounds just like him," says I, "though I'm glad you told me, for, generally speaking, the way a person talks to their own

folks is the truest index to their character. But Anthony and I have some talks a-coming!" I ended up.

And though his sister looked at my familiarity with a little surprise, we both laughed and understood each other.

I tell you, my mind was more set than ever on Mr. Earlham. 'Tain't all the quality of a man's pocketbook or clothes that counts in married life, as I know from Ephraim; it's his love and unselfishness that does the business.

I now took her arm and we walked along in confidential chat, the most important of which was that she was not to discover herself to my relations yet,—not till they had learned to know her for themselves.

Turning about to walk back to the hotel, we run plumb onto a circus passing through the town. In some wagons was a few strange-looking animals, and there was a big bull hitched behind this part of the parade.

We stood still, looking at it pass. But just as the bull got opposite us, it somehow broke its chain and made a straight plunge for the place where we was standing. Of

course we both took to our heels, and he took after us! Everyone was trying to catch him; but it wasn't any go, he was after *me*.

It's needless to say I run likewise. I didn't dare to go straight ahead, for I would be too soon caught, and so I run round and round a building standing by itself. You know it takes time for a big lumbering body to make a turn, which give me extra lee room. My hat was hanging down my back, and I didn't dare take time to pull it up. I was sure I felt my hair loosening from the exercise!

When I could almost feel his hot breath upon me, I suddenly remembered I had a red flannel skirt on. So giving one yank at my waist band, it slipped to the ground and I jumped out of it, still going my race course. The animal, seeing the red flag in front of him, stopped, tore it to pieces, and tossed it up on his horns. Just at that minute his keeper come up with him, and, getting hold of him, led him back to the company, which was all standing still, watching proceedings. The clowns was standing up on their seats, waving their whips, and the girls was looking with eyes wide open, some horrified and

shrieking and some laughing. As the keeper come up with his animal, one of the company says:

"Why don't you take the old lady along as an extra attraction in a side-show? That stunt would bring any house down!"

As for me, I just sunk on the nearest tree-stump and struggled for breath, and to getting myself looking presentable again.

During the evening I managed to bring Mr. Earlham's sister in contact with my relations, and they expressed themselves as being delighted with her. So much so good.

I don't know how much longer we'll stay here, but I know two things: I'll take no more mud-baths while the world stands, nor drink any more mineral water.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XX.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,
October 5th, 19–

My dear Susanna:

Arrived home at last! Our scalps are on, our nerves are rested, our bodies are in good condition, and our minds are better filled than when we left home. Every one of which conditions multiplies our joy of living.

The road from Lake Elsinore, where we left Mr. Earlham's sister with her party, was a fine and safe one.

We arrived at Hezekiah's house, which looked very inviting after our late experience, near noon on a Thursday. Angelina and the cousin Martha I've wrote about met us with a warm welcome at the door, the former dressed entirely in white, with a rose in her hair. I took special notice of Angelina, for I was feasting my eyes on her after being separated so long, and her face looked as white as her gown. At this my heart give a quick cry of alarm, but I said nothing,

trusting to time to find out what was the matter. The house looked more beautiful than ever, after being away from it such a space, and was dressed up pretty by having jardinieres of flowers all over it.

I think this is generally the case, don't you, when we have been away from our own belongings for a while? I mean that we come back to find our own are the best. Men travel all over the world, in quest of happiness, and then return to the home and the little circle to find they have been running away from, instead of towards it, all the time.

After the greetings was over, I went up to my room. I found that Angelina had beautiful flowers set around in vases in it, and a new novel laying on my desk, ready to read while I rested. The tears come in my eyes when I see it, for I find that as you grow old you appreciate little acts of kindness more and more.

For a day or two there was confusion till we all got settled; then the skein of affairs begun to unravel itself.

Finding Angelina alone in her room on

Saturday morning, I set down in a rocking-chair near her, for a chat.

"Tell me what you've been doing since I've been gone, Angelina," I says to her.

She put up her writing, and going over to the window-seat, which was piled with cushions, sat down among them. Framed by the pretty soft cream curtains with green draperies, she looked a picture to delight any artist.

"Why, I've managed to keep busy, Aunt Phoebe," says she, smiling. "I've had my tots at the home to carry off on picnics; my girls to help with their studies, problems and pleasures; and my own lessons in painting to keep up with."

"You didn't tell me you had been busy answering Mr. Earlham's letters," says I, slyly, "but I suppose you have. I don't want you to tell me anything that you would rather not, but I would like to know how he has got on in his studies and when he's coming back."

She didn't answer for a minute. Then she said quietly:

"I don't know anything more about Mr.

Earlham than you do, aunty. I have received no word from him."

"Angelina Colwell—" I exclaimed, "you hain't had any letter from Mr. Earlham? Then the devil's to pay for it!" I added, with conviction.

"Such language shocks me, Aunt Phoebe!" says Angelina, a little smile playing around her mouth. "You really ought to be more careful around virgin ears!" she added, and there was still a touch of mischief in them big expressive eyes.

"Look here, Angelina," says I, and I almost stopped rocking again, I was so intense, "only on the most emphatic occasions would I speak of the enemy of our souls in such distinct terms. But I also know that no power could have the heart to separate you and Mr. Earlham but that very same being."

"I am not so sure of that," Angelina answered tentatively. "Mr. Earlham has probably forgotten even my existence by this time!" And though she spoke calmly, I could see there was a little spasm of pain playing around her lips.

"Forgot his *soul!*" says I, disdainful.

"I told you it was only a case of friendship!" she answered, rather weakly.

"A flip to friendship!" I says, getting more and more resentful. "The friendship that I consider worth the name hangs onto its object with as much tenacity as love, only with different sentiment. It's just as necessary to have a friend as it is a lover; both fill different, though equally necessary, positions. But such conductions as you have just admitted has transpired, ain't worth the name of either one!"

I rocked furious, and she said nothing, only compressed her lips a little as though there was a pain tugging at her heart. Then my loyalty come to the surface. I sighed and says, firm:

"I don't believe a word of it! That man has wrote, and somehow you haven't got the letters."

"O, no, Aunt Phoebe," says Angelina, "don't think that, for that would be to hold somebody to blame, which is impossible."

But I had other questions on hand.

"How does Mr. Grey come on?"

"He has done everything in his power to make up for Mr. Earlham's coldness," says she, "and has been very devoted in his attentions. He cannot be accused of showing the white feather during your absence, anyhow," she ended up, with a half smile.

"And by this time I suppose you're very much impressed with him?" says I, a combination of feelings rankling in my mind.

"Well," she answered, hesitatingly, "it wouldn't be quite truthful for me to say that, for I didn't form my first opinion of him hastily. But he seems genuine in caring for my wishes. After all, it may be better to make one man sincerely happy and depend on outside interests for my own contentment, than to seek the impossible."

"Never, never!" says I, getting up, and walking over to the window excitedly. "Two wrongs don't make one right. You wrong any man by giving him your hand without your heart; and you wrong yourself most of all, for you get nothing in return."

Just at this juncture we heard the step of Lucy Jane coming towards the closed door, and I sat down quietly, that she might not

suspect anything of the subject of our conversation.

When she had taken a seat in the room, she begun to enter into discussion with Angelina about some evening dresses she wanted her to have made. Lucy Jane seemed wonderful pleased with Angelina, and the way all things was turning out. When she finished the conversation and got up to go, she says, laughing:

"You're just as sly a little puss as the next girl, Angelina. Here you let us all go off on a trip and stay home to do a courting that you wanted no stranger eyes to look upon. But it's the way of the world; stolen fruit always seems the sweetest, and your father intends to make this sweet for you by settling a large dowry upon you!"

Before Lucy Jane had finished this speech, Angelina had got up from her seat and gone over to her dressing-table, and begun brushing her long silky hair for lunch. Her back was to her mother, as she left the room, but the reflection in the mirror before her showed me a very white-faced girl, with no love in her eyes.

In the afternoon I set out for a walk; my mind was so wrought up by what Angelina had told me, that I needed to exercise my body to keep equipoise with my mind, and so restore the balance. It's always so with me at home. The day that I heard what Lyddy Skinner said about my knowing nothing of music, after I had been put on that committee by the church, I took a long walk in the woods, till I come out with the clear conviction that the smallest thing in the world was envy, and the greatest thing the rising above all criticism and being individual in perfecting a character. I felt now I must let my mind and body together work out the problem.

And it did. I started on foot up Broadway. There was crowds coming and going, and cars and automobiles flying hither and thither. I hadn't gone far when I see before me the light-haired girl of the notion counter.

You'll remember, no doubt, that when I started to shake hands with all of Hezekiah's employees in the store, this girl was extra friendly. I had always took an interest in her since.

I accosted her, for I was really interested in knowing how she was getting on. We stood talking about things in general for a few minutes. As she turned to go, she come up close to me, and with a pitiful look, says:

"O, what shall I do? Here comes my father! He is intoxicated today, and extra ugly. He doesn't believe I keep working, because I give my money to my mother to help run the house. This morning he said if he caught me on the streets during work hours he'd drag me down Broadway by the hair of my head!"

"Which he won't do," says I, always ready for business. "You just get behind me, and stay there. If I jump to one side, you jump too."

She run around back of me and did as she was told. Then we stood ready for business, for he was almost up to us.

"Come around here, you hussy!" the drunken man snarled out. "You can't hide from me; I'll teach you that!"

"And who are you daring to say that to?" says I, walking up boldly to him, and looking him in the eye.

"I got nothing to do with you!" says he, disregardful of me. "I want Mirandy."

"But I have with you," says I, "and that makes the difference! So now you just pull both ears to the front of your head and listen to me. As for the daughter you're calling for, whoever she is, you see she's not here; it was only an illusion of your befogged senses."

He made a lunge towards us, and I sprung to one side—Mirandy with me. The expected thing happened—he went sprawling on all fours!

Then I give Mirandy a shove and says:

"Sprint for your life, for he'll be worse than a fiend when he gets up!" And she did.

When the drunken man got to his feet, with fist shaking in the air, looking around for his prey, he met only the jibing faces of the collected crowd. As for his daughter and me, even if we had been together, the men around the intoxicated victim would have hid us from his sight. Providence had taken care of its own.

Nothing more of special outward interest took place before the end of my walk. It

was a satisfaction that my mind had got cooled off to its usual sane view of things. Evidently there was some mystery that must be cleared up before conflicting circumstances could be brought together in harmony. According to Jupiter, it was my place to now take hold of affairs, and I intended to do it; and in this, fate had already done its most to help me out, though unbeknown to me.

Something of emphatic interest, though, took place the following Monday morning, which the events of this day had prepared.

This was a note from the girl I had befriended. It read:

Dear Mrs. Aunt Phoebe:

I can't tell you how grateful I am to you for Saturday's deliverance. The only way I can show it is by telling you some news that I know will be of interest to you. Will you please meet me in the rooms of the Y.W.C.A.? Any time you name will be convenient for me if it is after store hours.

Gratefully yours,

MIRANDA ASHTON.

I immediately sat down at my desk and penned the following:

Dear Mirandy:

You are entirely welcome for any service I was to you on Saturday. But I shall be glad, nevertheless, to hear the news you've got to communicate. So I'll meet you at the place mentioned on Wednesday evening at half-past seven o'clock. Till then,

Your friend,

P. A. LYSANDER.

I was really very curious to hear what the girl had to communicate that could be of interest to me. I should have hurried up matters even more if I'd had the slightest inkling of its gravity; for matters was hurrying on faster than I knew, right to home.

I had had my talk with Angelina about Mr. Earlham Saturday morning. Sunday afternoon, after Mr. Grey had escorted Angelina to church, and come home with her to dinner, I had another short talk with her. This gentleman had said he had a very important engagement for the afternoon that he couldn't

break, but would be back in the evening, and so had left as soon as the meal was finished.

But I must hurry along, I have so much to tell you.

On Monday night Mr. Grey come again. I did wish Mr. Earlham would hurry and get back. I was most crazy at the way things was going. On Tuesday night we was to go to a concert give by a Scotch band in kilts, over which I was delighted, for the blood in my veins, though some two centuries back, called loud for my kinsmen.

During the day I had reason to consult Angelina on a matter of interest to us both. We was standing by a table, talking, when I happened to glance down. Angelina's hands rested on the table, and on the third finger of the left hand was a large new solitaire diamond ring!

The blood rushed to my head, and I felt dizzy for a minute. I couldn't believe the truth of my first impressions.

"Has your pa give you a new ring?" says I, for I thought it might be that she hadn't worn it much since we had been home.

"It's Mr. Grey's ring," she answered me

calmly, with cold white face and undisturbed feelings.

"O, Angelina!" says I, and I sunk down in the nearest chair, too weak from my feelings to stand up. "You can't be going to do anything so dreadful as that! Can't you imagine the horror of dwelling with one man with your body, and another man with your soul?"

"Aunty," says she, in the same imperturbable voice, "there really isn't any use to talk more about it. I have promised to become Mr. Grey's wife, and father and mother are delighted. Mr. Grey says he is supremely happy. It makes no difference about me. I can live up to the duties of a wife, and none of us have long to stay here to endure anything. Mr. Earlham cares nothing about me."

"Which is the biggest untruth under the sun," says I, "and I believe I'll prove it to you some day!" But she says:

"It will be too late."

There was clearly nothing to be done at present. So I asked the next natural question:

"When will you be married?"

"In January," says she, and I swallowed

a big lump that was sticking in my throat.

Still, January was about four months off, and sometimes even four hours changes a life. I didn't despair altogether.

By this time I was getting anxious for that interview with Mirandy. In fact, my mind was so distracted with its own thoughts that I was abstracted all through the day I was to meet Mirandy in the evening. But you know they say:

"The longest day, lived till tomorrow,
Will have passed away,"

and so the time for the interview with Mirandy come around in due season.

At seven o'clock, the evenings being still light, I slipped out of the house and walked to my appointment, without anyone discovering my departure. I found Mirandy waiting for me. We walked into a little waiting room, and way back, in the farthest corner, we sat down for our confab.

And it was an amazing one! Mirandy began by telling me that the reason she had answered my questions about that pretty girl at the lace counter so evasively, when

we had been talking on the street, was because she really wanted to shield her.

"From what?" says I.

"From scandal," says she, "for among all the girls of the store, I am the only one that knows her relations with Mr. Grey. Besides this, I really care for the lovely Miss Colwell, and think she ought to know what sort of a man her name has been coupled with in the newspapers."

"The newspapers?" says I, losing for the minute my excitement at the first part of her story, to listen to the last.

"Didn't you see the announcement of her engagement to Mr. Grey in big headlines in the *Times* this morning?"

"No, I was so upset by certain things, that I didn't look at the paper this morning," I answered, staggered by the news.

For I had received information the night before that this was the day Mr. Earlham was to arrive in town. And, of course, he would see it, which would end all hope in that direction. But there was no use dwelling on that now; I wanted to get material to work with.

"And can you prove this to me," says I, "if I should really need the proof?"

"It's the easiest thing in the world," says she, "for, being the bosom friend of Alice, she has told me all. Why, he was with her no longer ago than last Sunday afternoon!"

"The villain!" says I, too angry to speak.

No one knows the temptations that comes to some girls. Indeed, Mirandy soon verified the truth of this last thought, for she says:

"As for Alice, I would shield her all in my power, for she is a lovely girl. If you only knew all she has had to go through, you wouldn't look so disdainful as you do, Mrs. Aunt Phoebe," with a touch of resentment in her voice. I hadn't known that my face expressed any such sentiment, so I says:

"Indeed, I didn't know I looked so, for I'm anxious to hear the story. I suppose it was only the idea of walking into sin with both eyes open that made me look so. Please go on and tell me about your friend."

Then she says: "But Alice didn't walk into it, she was blindfolded into it. Her father is dead, and she has no brothers. Her mother is an invalid, and her sister dying of

consumption. At one time they were wealthy Southern people, which accounts for the glorious dark beauty of Alice—but that was long ago. They are really a very fine, old, aristocratic family by birth. Well, the mother needed attention and the sister needed medicine and dainties; but, after the rent was paid and the fuel for the fire supplied—which costs scandalous in this country—there wasn't hardly anything left, and Alice had to look neat in the store."

At this a big lump come up in my throat, and I says:

"I'm sure Mr. Colwell or Angelina would have helped them."

"But you forget," says Mirandy, "that Mr. Colwell has some three hundred employes, and Alice was only one, and had no special claim on him."

I see the justice of what she said, and didn't make no reply. Hard contact with poverty makes even young girls wiser than grey heads without it. Then she went on:

"But Mr. Grey, in paying attention to her, soon found out the condition of things. At first he offered to supply needed things for

the family in the guise of a friend; and this opened all their hearts to him. But he kept on pursuing Alice. Then, when he saw that to withdraw his aid would be to plunge the family in distress again and lead Alice once more into out-and-out despair, he worked his own will with her under the promise of settling an amount of money upon her that would make her independent for life. If she refused, he was to withdraw all aid and persecute them for what he had already done. But through it all he has acted as though he really loved the girl," she added, rather bitterly. Then she concluded:

"Alice would never have done wrong of her own will, for she is a pure, lovely girl at heart. She did it for those she loved. If you hadn't helped me on Saturday, I should probably never have told you this; but you did me a favor, and I knew this would be returning it a little, for I have always seen by your manner that you didn't like Mr. Grey any more than I did!"

When she had finished, I sat back trembling. And this was the man my niece had pledged herself to! But I thought that

Hezekiah and Lucy Jane would listen to my story and all might yet be right.

As for Alice, I didn't despise her now. There was deep sorrow in my heart at the villainy that was played upon her; but I knew God wouldn't judge her as men would. He looks at the heart, and she was more sinned against than sinning. As we was going to part, she says with a little laugh:

"Mr. Grey is true to his relations' ideas, though he claims to be a Spiritualist."

"And what was them?" says I.

"Why, he told Alice, though she was never to mention it to a living mortal, that an uncle of his father's was a Mormon elder in Salt Lake City,—and he sometimes wished he was too!"

"How scandalous!" says I, horror-stricken, though remembering what Angelina had said about the two being alike.

"Yes, I should say so," she answered dryly, "this Elder Morton relation of his ought to take steps to get this progeny within the fold!"

"Elder Morton!" I almost gasped, but quickly changed my tone into sort of a careless question as to whether I had heard the

name right. *My Mormon was Mr. Grey's father's uncle!*

Fact is stranger than fiction, Susanna, which I am fast finding out. How desires do run in the blood from father to son, and uncle to nephew! And Lucy Jane says there is no such thing as heredity!

When we parted, I went in one direction and Mirandy in t'other. It's needless to say that my brain was in a whirl.

Immediately on entering the house, I went up to my room, and soon put out the lights, to have greater quiet to think and plan.

So now you know something of what has transpired since I reached home, though you don't yet know all. The rest I'll communicate in my next, for I be so upset that I just can't write any more at this setting.

How glad I be that my own courting didn't have such tragedies connected with it. I'm pretty sure if this racket keeps up much longer my nerves that was so rested with the trip will again flop.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XXI.

Los Angeles, California,
October 12th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

I promised in my last letter to you to give you a short account of the Scotch concert I attended with my relatives, and hinted that something had took place there that give me a clue to Mr. Earlham.

Well, the concert was a great success. When the curtain rolled up on the band, with their red jackets, plaid kilts and plaid sashes, showing below them plaid stockings and shields, the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds, and my clapping was the last to die down.

Then the band of forty pieces struck up "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon," followed by the "Blue Bells of Scotland."

Next we heard, coming from behind the scenes towards the pulpit, the funniest music you ever heard in your life; it sounded as though lunatics was trying to play it. In a

minute on walked, one by one, five Scotchmen, in different dress than the band, with bag-pipes.

There wasn't a mite of tune to them bagpipes, only just the scratching and scraping of a jagged saw over a grindstone, and yet I liked it. I wondered if they used these—for I had heard they did—when the armies was called out to battle with the English.

Then about a dozen men come to the front and sung such songs as "Auld Lang Syne," "Come Under My Plaidie," and "My Heart is Sair for Somebody." I declare when they got to that, the thoughts of Ephraim was so strong in my mind that I couldn't help it—I just raised my cultivated voice with theirs in the refrain:

"I would do—what wad I not,
All for the sake of *somebody!*"

Well, it just brought the house down!

When the band was playing its last piece, I began to look around the audience. Happening to look up in the gallery, I see my nice little woman—Mr. Earlham's sister. I did hope I would come across her in

the lobby as we all passed out, and I did.

We saw each other at the same time, and begun advancing in the other's direction as fast as we could. She said she had been in town only a few days, and would not have come even now—they was enjoying that mineral water and them mud-baths so much—except that a letter from her brother had told her he would arrive in Los Angeles the next day, and she wanted to be on hand to meet him.

Then she communicated a fact that fairly made my heart stand still. Her brother had been so successful in his studies and in the work he had done on the other side, that they had offered him the position of assistant professor in the Heidelberg University; his duties were to begin in January. As the prospects was exceptionally good for his being quickly promoted to an independent professorship, he had accepted! He was come home only to settle his affairs.

Was ever woman in such a tangle of circumstances as I now saw ahead of me? The ships of Angelina and Mr. Earlham seemed bound to steer away from each other forever

in only four months' time: Angelina to marry Mr. Grey, and Mr. Earlham to bury himself in a German university! I couldn't hardly speak for a minute, then I says:

"I'm more glad for his success than I can tell you; but I hope to see him as soon as he arrives in town. I have great communications for him; for I set great store by him."

She smiled a little grateful smile, and soon after we parted, me first inviting her to see me, and finding out where she lived. Then I joined my party, who had got separated and was trying to find me. But my mind was full of the news, and this stayed with me.

The next day after the knowledge give me by Mirandy Ashton about Mr. Grey, I sought Lucy Jane out in the quiet of her room. I closed the door careful, so what I said should not be heard, and then sat down to unburden my soul of its weight.

"I've got something terrible important to tell you," says I, coming to the point at once.

"Well, I've nothing else in the world to do but to listen," says Lucy Jane, looking up and smiling.

So I repeated the story, as near word for

word as I could, that Mirandy had told me about Mr. Grey.

I thought that when I should finish Lucy Jane would be terrible excited and revengeful, and of course free her daughter from such connection. I wouldn't have been surprised if she had fainted or gone into hysterics. But though her color heightened a little, she sat and looked at me steady and rocked easily and calmly back and forth.

I was thunderstruck; all I could do was to look at her in amazement at such evident indifference. After a minute, she says:

"You must remember, Aunt Phoebe, that these things look very different to you up in a little rural village among the mountains than they do to us in a big fashionable city. Every young man must have his day in which to sow his wild oats. They appreciate married life all the more in contrast; its calm settles them down. Because Mr. Grey has done the thing which you say he is guilty of, it is no reason that his affection is any the less sincere for my daughter. Probably the overflow of love in his heart had to have an outlet in some direction, and it is to his

credit that he has raised this trash above want."

The whole speech had horrified me beyond expression; the injustice of the last stung me to the quick.

"And why is she more trash than he is?" says I. "How can you divide sin? You're so ready to smooth it out for Mr. Grey; would you do it as soon for a daughter?"

"A daughter who did wrong would be no daughter of mine," she says, with curled lip of scorn and indignation flashing from her eyes. "I would turn her out of house and home without a penny, and never hear her name mentioned as long as I lived!"

This was some more amazing talk; I doubted if I was in my senses and not dreaming.

"And where's the difference?" says I. "The Ten Commandments don't say that the 'woman shalt not' and the man may if he likes. Thank the Lord, I'm willing to keep by the simple old Decalogue and believe that, in the eyes of the Lord, right is right and wrong, wrong, whether it's among men or among women!"

But she only smiled sort of a pitying smile at my rural notions, and said nothing. There was clearly no help to be expected from this quarter, and so I turned my mind to other sources. Just as I turned to go out of the room, sick at heart over the way Lucy Jane was willing to sacrifice her daughter for gold, she says:

"Before you go, Aunt Phoebe, promise me, upon your honor, that you'll not mention a word of what you have told me to Angelina."

What could I do? She was my hostess, and I promised. But I made up my mind to interview Hezekiah on the subject. Being a man, he might see it in a different light.

I found this difficult to do, however. Hezekiah is a terrible busy man. Before I got access to his ears, still other developments had come to light, which I will tell you about shortly.

I suppose you wonder whether I told Angelina that Mr. Earlham had been engaged as professor in a university in Germany. You know my nature well enough to imagine that I couldn't keep it from her long, I guess.

When I told her, she didn't speak nor move, but her eyes had a wild kind of an appeal in them, and she looked as white as a ghost. When she spoke she said in a calm voice that sounded as hollow as though it had issued from a vault:

"He needs to be congratulated on his success; he has worked hard for it," and turned away.

"If he'll only come to be congratulated!" I answered, for I had also told her when he arrived in the city and of his sister. She seemed very much interested in the latter.

But he didn't come, and this nonplussed me. When a man's heart is warm towards a girl, it's pretty hard for him to stay away when he's where he can get to her. But, after a while, I come to the conclusion that he had seen the announcement of Angelina's engagement in the paper. Of course Mr. Earlham would think, under these circumstances, that he was not wanted; and I intended that he should know how matters stood.

I was figuring hard on how to make my point. You must remember, Susanna, I had to make my plans pretty carefully as

well as rapidly. Here it was October, and in December Mr. Earlham would again be off. Already Lucy Jane and Angelina had begun orders on the wedding trousseau, and I determined, if it was a possible thing, that Angelina should wear it as Mrs. Earlham, and not Mrs. Grey! Lives was at stake; lives of happiness or of misery, and genius was needed to make them come out right. A little incident happened to help me along, that I must tell you.

Angelina, Mr. Grey and myself was all going out to take a ride in the carriage one afternoon. I couldn't help noticing that whenever it was possible, Angelina took me along with her. She seemed to dread being alone with her fiancé; a mighty bad sign for coming years of companionship, when they would be housed together, I couldn't help thinking.

We drove along for about five minutes in silence. Angelina had on a beautiful dress and a hat with the white plume a-waving that her ma had give her as a *souvenir* of that widow's establishment at San Diego! But she had none of the light and glow of

love's enthusiasm in her face and eyes. Instead, she sat as cold and frigid in her attitude as though she had been married forty years and been resigned to a disappointed union that she was making the best of.

To be sure, she talked kindly and tried to see things from Mr. Grey's angle, for what clever woman would do otherwise? She believed that all his happiness centered in her, and she struggled heroically to put down the thoughts that I knew was crowding her mind. I watched them till the sight pained me, and then I turned to look at the people on the sidewalk.

And it was a happy turn for me. Right near the carriage I see the man walking briskly along that I set such store by. Mr. Earlham, with his characteristic energy, was evidently intent on some business. Anyone could see this by the expression of his face, and my heart stood still, for a minute, in fear that he wouldn't look up. But the magnetism worked as usual. Just as he got almost opposite us he looked up and directly into the carriage, with sort of an abstracted look on his face.

I was so overjoyed that I looked to Angelina right away, to see if she see him. And what do you think met my eyes?—she that had been so still and pale a minute before, now was laughing and rosy and looking up with a great show of affection in Mr. Grey's face! I was so thunderstruck I could hardly believe my eyes. But I made up my mind she should see Mr. Earlham anyway. So I give her knee a nudge, and says:

"There's our friend Mr. Earlham on the sidewalk, Angelina!"

At that of course she was compelled to look in the direction I indicated, and then we both bowed. Mr. Earlham tipped his hat and fastened his eyes on Angelina's face as though he never wanted to take them off again. Then I see if feelings had been busy writing their story on Angelina's face, they hadn't forgot to put companion chapters on his'n. He had grown haggard with study and heartache.

Angelina bowed; but what a bow! It was a slight inclination of her proudly-arched neck—for Angelina is human. She had seen Mr. Earlham before I did, and had de-

termined he shouldn't think that she cared that he had separated himself from her. Weak human nature! Aren't we all alike the world over? Being an outside observer, I could see how foolish it was for Angelina to think that she could deceive Mr. Earlham. Their souls had talked so long together that they still held converse, and knew that their sentiments towards each other remained unchanged.

But the inevitable climax happened. With an hysterical little laugh, Angelina again relapsed into a cold being, and trembled from head to foot.

When we got back from our drive, I found that Jupiter had put forth another effort to help me straighten out affairs. Angelina went to her room to prepare for dinner, and I went to mine; and it was there the revelation was made.

In one of her letters to us at the beach, during the summer, Angelina had mentioned that her maid seemed very blue and quiet where she used to be garrulous and bright. For this, none of us could account. She was paid good wages, Angelina was more than

kind to her, and she had never been known to have any outside entanglements of a love nature. Now I found her crying in my room. Of course I was surprised, and she was frightened; for she hadn't expected us home nearly so soon. But I calmed her fears and told her I was her friend and wanted to talk to her. I was sure she would make some revelation about the butler that I wanted to hear. And she did.

She had discovered, like lots of her more fortunate sisters, the perfidy of man. She had believed she was the sole object of affection with the butler—and found she had a rival. The upshot of the whole matter was that she had caught the butler making love to the chambermaid, and indignation and jealousy had brought her to the confession which she now made.

This was, that after she had vowed to be revenged, circumstances threw the material in her way. The butler had carelessly thrown down the coat of his livery upon a chair in the housekeeper's room just after he had taken it off to put on a street coat late in the evening. Being in haste to meet the

chambermaid, whose day off it was, he had failed to take any papers out of his pockets.

I don't need to tell you, Susanna, that a jealous woman will stoop to any mean trick that first comes in her head. But the girl was human, and looking for material to get her revenge on. Most likely she thought she might find a scrap of writing from the other girl to the butler, and though this would be the most harrowing thing to her feelings that could take place, woman-fashion she looked for it. She found material of another sort: this was three letters addressed to Angelina from Germany in a gentleman's handwriting.

I had closed the door when she first begun to tell me her story and sat down near her. Now I hitched my chair up a good bit closer in my excitement, and leaned over towards her. I could have shouted for joy: here was the missing link!

"And where be they?" says I, hardly able to keep my voice at the proper pitch, I was so elated.

Now I understood it all; the butler had been bribed by Mr. Grey to withhold all of Angelina's letters, and I had really heard

the rattle of money and the word "letter" pass between them in the hall that night before we started for San Diego!

"They are burned up!" says she, and the girl fell to weeping again.

"Burned up!" says I, my eyes starting from their sockets; "then I'm afraid we're really undone for proofs!"

"Indeed I didn't mean to," says the poor girl, sobbing, "and it's that as much as anything that's so on my conscience that set me crying again today. My mistress looks so pale and sad that it nearly breaks my heart, and I dare not tell her what I've done for fear of losing my place. I wouldn't have done it, only that when the butler found out the letters was gone he immediately suspected me and said that if he didn't find them letters he'd set a detective to work, for on them depended a big sum of money. He was not to be paid until Mr. Grey was sure of Miss Angelina, and the butler was hoarding up the letters. Of course I was bound he would never come in ahead on them letters, for he might marry the other girl with the money. Though I don't want him myself,

and wouldn't have him for a gift when he'll take up with such truck as that chambermaid, it ain't my particular business to strew his bed with roses!" she added bitterly.

After seeing this glimpse into her heart, I couldn't act as angry as I had started out to be. After all, the information was invaluable to me for material to work on. So I told the girl that when it came to light, as it certainly would, I would protect her place for her.

After she left me, I sat still and thought and thought. I was deep in the mystery of them thoughts when dinner was announced.

But I was determined not to let the grass grow under my feet. So the next day I ferreted out Hezekiah in his den and walked in upon him unannounced. Then I shut the door and locked it. At this Hezekiah swung around in his easy chair and laughed.

"This isn't Daniel in the lion's den, is it?" says he, gaily.

"That depends on how much of a lion you calculate to be," says I, "and as for Daniel, if the name signifies one who's going to stand up for the right in the face of all opposition —then I'm he."

"How brave this Daniel is!" he returned in the same humor, "but are you sure you've first opened your windows towards Jerusalem and prayed, as a fit prologue to your entrance here?"

"Indeed I have, Hezekiah," I returned with feeling. "If you know how much and how often, you'd listen more earnestly to me in what I'm going to tell you, than you ever did to anyone in your life before!"

"My, my!" says Hezekiah, getting more serious, "is it as grave as that? Then I beg of you, sit right down in this easy chair opposite me and unburden your soul. I'll listen with all the attention in the world."

Then I set out to tell him. I told him first of all the story Mirandy Ashton had told me. I watched with eagerness for the effect; whether he would evince the same disregard of Mr. Grey's actions that Lucy Jane had done. He sat still and thought very earnestly for a minute, and then he says slowly:

"I'm sorry for what you tell me, Aunt Phoebe. I thought Mr. Grey was above such villainy; but human nature is a strange

thing. Some men seem to be able to separate love and passion and feel that the two need not conflict in forming an alliance. Mr. Grey will make as good a husband, in all probability, as the great majority of men. I do not see how the affair can be helped. Angelina appears satisfied"—strange blindness—"and affairs are moving rapidly forward to an issue. I guess all will come out right," he ended up with a half smile, as though dismissing the subject.

"But Angelina *ain't* satisfied," says I, putting all the confidence I could in my voice.

"If I believed that I would do all I could to keep her at home till she was," says he, getting up and moving uneasily around the room.

This was just what I wanted; it give me an opening for the rest of my discourse, so I says:

"You mean that, do you, Hezekiah?"

"I surely do," says he, "for Angelina is very near and dear to my heart. But I have thought the women folks could manage their own concerns. Though Angelina doesn't show

her sentiments very strongly towards Mr. Grey, I supposed it was only her kittenish ways. All women are more or less offish until a man becomes master of them, and then they settle down into loving, ideal wives. It's the way of the sex."

"Which is all you know about it!" says I, rather spiritedly. "Most men know as much of the workings of a woman's heart as a lion knows of a lamb. If a woman doesn't give her whole affection to a man before she's married, she never will afterward. He's master of her heart long before he is of her whole being."

Then I told him the rest of the story about the burnt letters which Mr. Earlham had sent to Angelina from Europe. When I had finished I see there was a pleased look on his face. I had always believed that Lucy Jane was more set against Mr. Earlham than Hezekiah was.

"I'm sorry to know such things have been going on under my roof," says he, "but I'm glad to have brought to light these letters of which you tell me. I hadn't said anything about the matter, but I felt sorely

hurt to think I had been mistaken in Mr. Earlham. I went to considerable expense in helping him last summer, and though I did it to please Lucy Jane, there has always been a manliness about Angelina's friend that appealed to me as being very desirable, and I wanted to see him succeed. He seems to appreciate to the utmost what I did for him, but he has scarcely spoken of Angelina to me since his return, and he has not called upon her. Now I think the matter is explained; he thinks she has tired of him."

"Will you help me if I can prove to you that she loves Mr. Earlham instead of Mr. Grey, and consent to the change—though it is the eleventh hour—from being the bride of one to the bride of the other?" And I threw all my powers of supplication into my voice.

For a minute Hezekiah hesitated—I suppose he was thinking of that vast amount of money—and then he says:

"If you can bring Lucy Jane to this view."

Now I knew I couldn't unless he threw his weight in the balance, so I answered:

"Will you undertake to talk the matter over with her and bring her, with yourself,

to be unseen spectators of a little scene I'll bring about, with none of the parties being the wiser for your being within earshot of proceedings?"

This seemed fair to his business acumen, and he says:

"I will. Nothing has a right to stand in the way of Angelina's married happiness. Only don't tell Angelina of the letters to prejudice her in Mr. Earlham's favor." And I see love was rising triumphant over greed.

Of course I was delighted with his consent. So you can see I have plenty to do. Whether I succeed or not depends upon the genius with which it is done, for I have to work all parties according to their foibles and temperaments, which ain't an easy matter.

The house, meanwhile, is a scene of confusion. In two months' time Angelina's trousseau must be finished. There are billows of laces and chiffons, and calling gowns and evening dresses are being planned and worked on. There are four dressmakers busy, and machines stitching all the day. Everything seems pivoted on this; all must bend to the anticipated union.

And what about her? She has nothing to say about it. Lucy Jane has took charge, and is in her element.

I've got my plans most perfected, and I shall do my best to make them work. I hope to have great news for you in my next letter. The only calm I have these days is in thinking of my quiet Vermont home among the beautiful Green Mountains. Yet there is another calm in prospect, too, for Mr. Grey is to go away to see about one of his speculations, and is to be gone a week.

As the Scotch say: "Wha will bell the cat?" I have, in turn, my answer prepared, which is, that I am "Setting a stout heart to a stey brae." Translated, this means that though I have started on a most difficult undertaking, I'm carrying a brave and determined mind to its accomplishment.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XXII.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,
November 1st, 19—

My dear Susanna:

There was a man who used to sit at the breakfast table, and while he was helping himself to soft-boiled eggs and hot muffins say the most wonderful things to the rest of the boarders around him. One thing in particular that Ephraim told me this man, Mr. Holmes, said, was: "The truest lives are those that are cut diamond-fashion, with many facets answering to the many-planed aspects of the world about them." By the time you finish reading this letter, you'll know why I've took this thought into my life, for I've tried to face every side of life since I sat down to talk with you before.

To show you how busy I've been doing this, I shall have to commence telling you my line of operations to bring about my pet ambition: the joining of Mr. Earlham and Angelina.

I told you that Mr. Grey had gone out of town to look after one of his speculations that wasn't going just right. Nothing could have been more opportune than his absence at this time, for the development of the plan I had in mind.

The day after we met Mr. Earlham on the street, Angelina was confined to her room all day with a sick headache. At least, that's what she said it was; but I knew it was a sick heartache.

Next day after my talk with Hezekiah, I made up my mind that I would call on Mr. Earlham's sister. So I donned my black silk and started off.

When I rung the bell of the house where she was staying, a servant appeared with a card tray. I didn't have no cards, so I says to her:

"Is Mrs. Wetherly to home?"

"Yes'm," says she of the sandy locks.

"Then tell her Mrs. Lysander would like to see her," says I.

"Yes'm," says she, and just then, to my joy, I saw Mr. Earlham's sister right behind her.

"Come right in," says she heartily, with that sweet smile of hers, grasping both my hands and drawing me into the hall.

I was so glad to see her again that it loosened the cords that was binding heart and tongue. I talked long and earnestly with her, and I come away more pleased than ever with that nice little woman. It was planned that she was to spend an afternoon with me the following week.

About three days after this interview Mr. Grey was to leave town. The evening before he went there was to be a big reception give him and Angelina in honor of the coming wedding by some society people.

When they come home I was still up. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and I was looking out upon the silver picture of mountains in the distance, and orange trees, waving palms and roses in the foreground.

As I see him bid Angelina good-night and good-bye, I says to myself, out loud:

"May it be the last of such communications to take place between you!"

I was still talking to myself when Angelina come in the room.

"Are you up, Aunt Phoebe?" says she, in surprise. "I thought I heard your voice, though it's so dark in the room I wasn't sure it was really you."

"Yes," says I, "I was talking to myself."

"I'm sure you had a sensible person to talk to then," says she, smiling.

"Angelina," says I, quietly, "I've only one more talk coming with you about this love affair of yours. Will you listen to me tomorrow morning?"

"Why, certainly," says she quickly. "I always have time to talk with you, Aunt Phoebe. I'll either come to your room or you can come to mine."

About ten o'clock the next morning I went to Angelina's room. After she had made me comfortable, she sat down with a questioning look on her face.

"Ain't you tired out, Angelina?" I asked; for she had been on the "go" ever since her engagement had been announced. I knew that above all things she liked a quiet, domestic, studious life.

"Indeed I am, Aunt Phoebe," she says, relaxing. I think she felt relieved that my

talk had not begun in a strenuous vein. Such gets tiresome very quick, and I knew Angelina's disposition pretty well by this time.

"Wouldn't you like to take a rest?" I next asked.

"I would be very glad of some quiet," says she, "but I don't see how I'm to procure it until after I'm married. If I refuse any of the invitations to the affairs gotten up in my honor by my friends, they will be hurt, and that I would not have for anything."

"S'pose I arranged matters for you so you could get one now, while Mr. Grey is away, would you take it?" I asked.

"Why, if it were possible, I should be glad to," she answered with some enthusiasm, "but I don't see how you could work it. The dressmakers have to fit me and consult me about numberless little details. It is all so horribly tiresome," she said wearily, "but it is the penalty of becoming a rich man's wife."

"Would you care as little for all this arrangement if the eyes of Mr. Earlham instead of Mr. Grey was to rest upon you?"

Her face flushed and a pained expression

came into it, but she said quite steadily:

"It is possible I might feel different under those circumstances."

"Well, Angelina, look here," says I, leaning towards her a little in my eagerness, "of course I ain't sure that I'll succeed, but I want you to help to prove, before it's too late, that Mr. Earlham and not Mr. Grey is your true lover. Will you give it to me?"

She didn't say nothing for a minute. When she did speak there was a quiet resolution in her voice.

"Since you are so sure Mr. Earlham still cares for me, I'll help you prove it in any way that will not involve my independence of attitude. I could never throw myself into any man's arms!"

"And you won't have to," says I, delighted at her consent.

"But what about father and mother?" she asked, doubtfully.

"You don't think I'd come to you first without attending to that, do you?" says I. "I'd be a poor planner if I didn't arrange the setting around my heroine before I brought her onto the stage."

"Very well," says Angelina, with a smile around her mouth and the shadow of a twinkle in her eye, "be so good, Madam Manager, as to set forth the first act to view. I s'pose you'll want to manage the rest of the play yourself."

So for fifteen minutes I talked low and earnest, with sometimes a demur and sometimes a low laugh from my companion. Then she consented to send the word forth that she was not home to visitors for a few days. I left, delighted with my success.

Next I sought my prime helper, Hezekiah.

"And how does the warfare come on with Lucy Jane?" says I.

"All right," says he. "At first she didn't want to listen to any kind of a proposal that might make a possible change in the plans; she said that appearances would be dreadful if Angelina should change from one man to another. But I've overruled the objection."

"And who is Angelina marrying for," I says, indignant, "for herself or for the onlooking mob of gossipers? Such are not worth noticing!"

"That's the argument I brought up to

Lucy Jane," Hezekiah answered, "and after a while she consented to be one of the audience to the scene you are getting up for us. I think, too, that since Mr. Earlham has had the position offered him in the Heidelberg University, she is not so set against him as formerly."

"But yet he's the very same man!" I returned. To this Hezekiah answered nothing. In a minute he says:

"But when is the show coming off, Aunt Phoebe? I'm really getting interested."

"That I'll tell you as soon as Angelina gets a letter from Mr. Grey saying he'll be back. I don't want to get her seriously ill before I have to," I says.

"What on earth do you mean?" says Hezekiah in amazement.

Then I sat down and unfolded some of my plans, but not all. It's always best to leave a lee room to work in. As he listened he made one or two objections, as Angelina had done, but on the whole he seemed tickled over the outline. When I had finished I says:

"You believe all's fair in love and war, don't you, Hezekiah?"

"Surely," says he, "every man will agree with you there." So it was settled I was to keep to my program.

The butler was my next source of uneasiness. I knew that he was a friend to Mr. Grey, and I must have everything pliable in my hands; in other words, be entire mistress of the occasion. Otherwise, everything would be a fizzle. I didn't intend this man should upset the plan of weeks!

When I had a good chance, I told Hezekiah of my fears.

"That's easily fixed," says he. "I would dismiss the man, but really, in his way, he is quite invaluable; he knows the ways of the house so well. So I will dispatch him on a message the day you want the house clear of him, and put the footman in his place, who is partial to neither one of the men."

So this burden was off my mind. I was as uneasy as a hen with its head cut off, till Angelina got that letter from Mr. Grey.

Then she told me I had two days in which to perfect all my plans; and I set about the work with my whole soul. It was win all or lose all. In fact, it hung on such a pivot

that you could fairly say, "Head, I win; tails, I lose." Wasn't it worth a year's energy?

My next move was to write a note to Mr. Earlham. This I wouldn't trust to the mails, but drove around in the carriage with it, heavily veiled. I wanted to put it right into the hands of Mr. Earlham's sister, so he would be sure to get it. When she see me, she was straightway alarmed, and says:

"What *is* the matter; can't I help you in some way?"

For a minute my conscience kind of smarted her face was so full of distress, but there was such great stakes at issue, that I only says, hurriedly:

"I dare not stop a minute; it mightn't be safe. Only be sure that Mr. Earlham gets this right away. It's about Miss Colwell. There ain't a thing anyone can do, if there was I would tell you."—And I run down the steps and hurried into the carriage.

Then I next wrote a note to Mr. Grey and sent it by a messenger boy, with the word "Important" in big letters on the envelope. The scene wasn't to come off till the next day, when Mr. Grey was to arrive in town.

The next day dawned bright and sunny, and the nightingales and larks sang especially sweet. The open windows let in the odor of sweet-scented honeysuckles and roses, and the palms waved over all like a benediction—and this was October.

Hezekiah had arranged his business plans so that he could remain home for the afternoon. In the morning he sent the butler off out of town to be gone till night. The footman was installed in his place, with instructions to do and say as I bid him. So I set out to give him his cue.

"Jacob," says I, "I expect two gentlemen to call upon me this afternoon. The first one will call about two-fifteen, and the other at three o'clock. You are to look terrible solemn, as though we had had a great grief, and answer no questions. If the last should happen to come before the first has gone, you are to show him into the reception room, and tell him I will be in in a very few minutes. These gentlemen understand it is impossible for them to see anyone but me, so you be sure to follow instructions. *Under no circumstances take their cards to anyone else!*"

"Yes'm," said Jacob, respectfully. "I understand perfectly!"

The hour was fast approaching for the comedy or tragedy—which was it to be? My fast-beating heart couldn't help asking the question.

I inspected the hall seat again, to see if I had arranged the draperies over it so that anyone sitting down on it would be entirely hidden from view. I worked them curtains on the pole, and see all was right, for I had had the prime factors in the play all to work on my plans for two days. The dressmakers had been give the day off, and practically we was alone in the house. Then I had the table in the library pulled right in front of the curtain separating that room from the living-room, so that anybody sitting at it would be sure to get in the direct current of air that would carry conversation.

In this way we would really be in a circle, so that what was said would reach every ear. Lucy Jane and Hezekiah would be in the hall on the seat beside the stairs, hidden by the curtain falling down in front of it; Angelina would be seated at the library table,

hidden from view of the living-room by the portieres; I would be on the floor in the living-room!

I could hardly eat any lunch, and I knew Angelina didn't. The rest was, of course, more indifferent, but all felt a peculiar magnetic pressure in the air.

Promptly at ten minutes past two I escorted Hezekiah and Lucy Jane to their seat in the hall. Then I had Angelina take her place in the library. She looked a sight for any cavalier or knight to battle for to win. She had on a dainty white dress, and a cluster of La France roses in her belt. In her hair was a small rose of the same kind. Her eyes were unnaturally bright, and there was a flush of color in her cheeks.

Promptly at two-fifteen the bell rang. I went with slow, faltering steps towards the living-room. I had to my eyes one of Ephraim's red bandannas, with a little onion juice sprinkled on it!

"What in the world is the matter?" says Mr. Grey, with more concern than I would have give him credit for.

"O, Mr. Grey, Mr. Grey!" I sobbed, rocking

back and forth in my grief. "To think that it should have been Angelina that was stricken! Her parents are so overcome they can't see anyone at present. She that was so beautiful to be ruined for life!"

At this Mr. Grey jumped to his feet, saying savagely:

"Why don't you talk so someone can understand you, woman! Has Mr. Colwell failed in business, or what is it?"

"Didn't Angelina tell you in her letter that she was feeling sick?" says I, in muffled tones behind the kerchief, and getting that onion juice closer to my eyes.

"Angelina sick?" he almost shouted, "then where is she? I do remember that she said she had a headache, but I didn't think it was serious!"

"O, if it was only a simple sickness!" says I—that onion juice was getting pretty strong, and I knew he could see my eyes was red and full of tears when he caught a glimpse of my face—"but to think of her being marred for life. Maybe it's even death to you to stay here!"

"Death?" says he, looking scared. "For

heaven's sake shoot out what you're trying to get at!"

"Oh, oh!" I moaned, "Angelina's got the smallpox! We've just discovered it!"

"Smallpox!" he cried. "You wicked woman, to induce me into this house!"—and with one bound he was out of the room, grabbing his hat as he went, and going through the door held open by the footman like a shot!

As soon as he had got a few steps, on the dead run, I walked back into the hall and says low but distinct:

"Come!"

With that, Lucy Jane, Hezekiah and Angelina, with faces red from laughing, all run with me to the front door.

We stood on the porch, in the doorway, looking as long as we could see him. We was all convulsed with laughter. As we turned to go in, Angelina says:

"Aunt Phoebe, it doesn't really seem right to use such deception!"

"Well, desperate cases need desperate measures," says I, "and I guess you'd find this deception is slight in comparison to what you'd find if you married such a man. He

didn't even ask how sick you were, or if you was in any immediate danger; only an overwhelming regard for his own safety!" I concluded indignantly.

"But s'pose Mr. Earlham should act the same?" says she. "Then I'd be disappointed all around!"

But I could tell by the tone of her voice what a relief the disposal of Mr. Grey was to her.

"Then you could take charge of a children's home, as matron, maybe," I answered, smiling.

"Which would be a very happy work for me," she returned, brightly.

The party again set themselves in order, and I again trotted upstairs, for it was now ten minutes of three. Mr. Grey hadn't been in the house more'n ten minutes, but we had all sat down for a chat together after his ridiculous exit. I see that already Lucy Jane was relenting and getting her eyes opened to the true condition of things.

Exactly at three o'clock come the characteristic ring of Mr. Earlham. I trembled for joy myself. I wondered—and yet

I didn't need to, for I knew—whether Angelina was trembling too. But I made sure all was in readiness for an equal amount of grief to be displayed before him. I would use fair play, anyway.

This time, with a white bandanna sprinkled with the same lotion to incite tears, I staggered into the room where Mr. Earlham was walking up and down, too perturbed by conflicting emotions to take a seat.

As soon as I entered the room he come towards me with both hands outstretched. I could have thrown my arms around his neck, I was so delighted to see him. I put one hand in both his and held the handkerchief up to my eyes with the other.

"O, what is the matter, my dear Aunt Phoebe?" he says, with his heart in that rich deep voice.

My courage almost give way when I heard them tones, and the way he had addressed me. I knew that he had spoken without any forethought what was in his heart, and it went straight to mine.

"O, Mr. Earlham," I says, swaying back and forth in the chair to which he had led

me, "how can I ever tell you what has happened to our lovely Angelina!"

At this I peeked out of the side of my handkerchief and see him grow so white that he had to take hold of a chair to keep from falling.

"My God!"—but he said it reverentially —"what is the matter with her?"

"O," says I, "she's probably sick unto death!"

"Where is she?" says he, so quickly that I almost jumped. "I must see her this minute!"

"Not when you know what's the matter," I says, finding a fresh place on the handkerchief, "her beauty is ruined for life."

"What do I care about beauty!" he fairly snorted.

"O, but," says I, getting more and more convulsed with grief, for I was going to put the hardest test to him that I could, "if she lives, she'll probably be blind and scarred for life. For in lots of cases of smallpox the pits fill in the eyes and disfigure the whole face! O, why couldn't her beauty have been spared; my poor girl, my poor girl!" I ended up, shaking from head to foot.

"Then I will see her this minute, whether you will or no," says he, getting up determinedly and standing in front of me. "If she ever needed comfort and love she does now. And as for her being scarred by the disease, if she were deaf, dumb, blind, she would still be the idol of my heart and my soul's companion!"

Neither of us said anything for a minute after this outburst of a passionate heart longing for the object of its affection. Then I says:

"But if you care so much for her, why haven't you shown it since you've been home?"

This seemed to bring him back to himself, and he says, as though echoing an inward groan:

"But what have I been saying? Miss Colwell is engaged to another, and of course wants nothing of the love that is in my heart for her!"

"But, leaving Mr. Grey altogether out of the question," says I, "just the same as though we was considering that match off —which I don't say it is—but considering

it so, tell me why you have acted so indifferent. This I feel I have a right to know, since I'm the one that has sent for you in our grief."

By this time I had kind of got my handkerchief down into my lap, though I kept my face solemn and my eyes downcast.

"If you think I have been indifferent," says he, "look at this!" And from his breast pocket he brought forth to view the picture of Angelina that Dominie had give him as a parting gift before he went to Europe. It was thumb-worn and I could see where tears had fallen on it.

"I wrote three letters to her when I was away, which I know she must have received, for they were never returned to me. Yet they were not answered. With heart still full of hope that would not be put down, I landed in Los Angeles, thinking I would soon have an opportunity to see and talk once more with the constant image of my thoughts, only to read the announcement of her engagement to Mr. Grey the very day I arrived! Could I take any other course than I have? If I had seen her, I could not have kept silent."

I was quiet, for I knew he had done the only honorable thing.

"But where is she?" said he, tucking the picture back again where he had carried it ever since he had received it. "Do let me see and speak to her once more, even if she bids me leave her never to come near her again. You must grant me this!" he said, imploringly.

"But you might catch the smallpox," I said, wanting to put one last test to him.

"Better so," says he, "than live in the world after she has left it."

I thought I had said all that was necessary, so I answered:

"Well, if you are determined, come on; but the consequences be on your own head!" —saying which, I led him to the door of the library and, holding back the curtains, give him a shove in.

Then I dropped the portieres; but in that glimpse I had seen a white-robed girl with eyes full of love, waiting for her lover, and I was satisfied.

There are some scenes that it's a sacrilege to witness; and this was one of them.

Going straight over to the hall seat where Lucy Jane and Hezekiah was, I says:

"Now you can come out into the reception room with me, and we'll talk the matter over!"—for I wanted not only portieres to be between the lovers and us, but a hallway and a door. And they come out.

Lucy Jane's eyes was full of tears, and Hezekiah's voice was husky with emotion.

When we got into the room and closed the door, Lucy Jane come over to where I was and took my hand in both hers. Then she says:

"Aunt Phoebe, you have been the guardian angel of Angelina. But for you I can now see she would have had a life of misery. I'm truly sorry I have been so thoughtless of your feelings and my own best interests!" And her voice broke down.

Mine did too when I tried to answer her, for the whole affair had been a terrible strain on my nerves, and I really had a great affection for all of them. Then I says:

"'All's well that ends well,' as Ephraim has often said, so we'll let bygones be bygones!"

By this time Hezekiah had gained command of his voice, and says:

"Your coming to California has been a great blessing to us, Aunt Phoebe. We have not always been able to see things in the light you did, but if your vision's as clear on all subjects as it has been on this, then I think it's time to borrow some of your second sight, so we can see things too!"

Then we all sat down and talked matters over. Each of us was listening though not acknowledging it to the others, for the footsteps of Angelina and Mr. Earlham.

We didn't have to wait many minutes before we heard them coming, and I think each one of us steeled ourselves so that we shouldn't break down when we see the happiness of the two young people. I was so overcome, inwardly, that I fairly clenched my teeth together, to keep control of my face and my eyes dry from real tears.

When they come into the room, Mr. Earlham's arm was placed lightly but protectingly about Angelina's waist, and his left hand held her right hand. She was radiant, and her eyes looked as though recently washed

of the dust of disappointment by tears. There was a deep, joyful, almost sacred solemnity in the whole bearing of Mr. Earlham, as though he had been in Heaven and come down to the earth with a message from celestial abodes.

Involuntarily we all rose when they entered the room, as we would at some sacred rite. But none of us spoke. I never felt such feelings before in my life. It seemed as though two lost souls had been mourning over the absence of each other, and looking in every corner of the world for its mate, and just come to its own.

They come straight up to me. Lucy Jane and Hezekiah fell off to one side, leaving me the place of honor. Mr. Earlham took my hand and looked long and steadily into my eyes, too full of emotion for speech. Angelina threw her arms around my neck and buried her face on my shoulder. Then she burst into tears. None of us spoke; none of us moved; none of us tried to stop the unburdening of a heart pent up with months of misery.

This seemed to break the silence, and we

talked, though almost in religious tones. It all seemed so sacred. Lucy Jane and Hezekiah welcomed him truly and affectionately as their exchange son-in-law, and I sat and looked and looked at them. My eyes couldn't seem to be satisfied. Angelina's face was illuminated, and her large, thoughtful blue eyes was liquid with a tender love. Mr. Earlham's face was as firm as ever, but was lighted with an inward light. His fine wavy black hair was thrown with the same careless ease back from his broad white forehead. I was feasting on all these features, when Dominie bounded in.

It's wonderful how children take things in at a glance. He went straight up to Mr. Earlham, as though he had been present at all the proceedings, and wrung his hand with all his strength. Boy-fashion, he had such a lump in his throat he couldn't speak, even if he'd known what to say.

So this was my scene and the way the play went off. Are you satisfied with it?

We was none of us surprised when Mr. Earlham come back in the evening and brought his sister with him. I see to it that

the whole family was took up with her, so as to give Mr. Earlham and Angelina a chance for their own separate conversation. Nor was we surprised when we see a new diamond engagement ring on Angelina's finger after he left.

The next day Angelina returned to Mr. Grey a little parcel in which was done up his ring and the few letters received from him. The dressmakers was put back to work again, and now Angelina is as particular about every detail and ribbon of her wedding clothes as she was indifferent before.

The orders for the wedding invitations was soon give, for she is to be married in only five weeks. Mr. Earlham must start for Europe by the tenth of December in order to take his place by the first of January. This is the only hard part to me—the taking of Angelina from our midst. But the world is small, after all, and ships will always continue to ply the ocean. Who knows but that even I shall visit her in her home across the sea. Also, maybe I can there study music to better advantage! I am rejoiced, anyway, that Mr. Earlham's, instead of Mr. Grey's,

name is coupled with hers on them cards. So in my next I s'pose I'll tell you about the wedding.

That man at the breakfast table, I was telling you of in the first part of this letter, also said another thing that now comes to my mind. This was: "Every event that a man would master must be mounted on the run," and if I haven't caught this horse of events on the gallop and rode it to victory, then I'd like to have anybody tell me how to do it! There's another man I hope soon to hear talk at breakfast, and that's Ephraim.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

CHAPTER XXIII.

On the Train,
December 16th, 19—

My dear Susanna:

Wedding bells! Ain't I sorry they don't have speech, so they could each tell their tale. How many stories we'd hear! No need then of writing books—love stories, anyway. All we'd need to do would be to go out to the different churches and listen to the stories sent forth by the chimes that are ringing to the world the joining of two lives.

There are several wedding bells I'm aiming to tell you about; but I'll start with the loudest and most important. You can easily imagine these belonged to Angelina.

As soon as people got informed of the change in Angelina's program, they just flopped from one to t'other, too. Such is human nature. Little by little the whole story leaked out, and then people began to laugh and despise the man who had shown

himself a coward, for all the world loves a lover.

Congratulations and presents begun to pour in from all quarters. If ever that butler earned his wages, he did in the five weeks before Angelina's marriage. Messenger boys come spinning up the drive, and choice cut flowers fell in profusion on the happy bride-to-be. Angelina was as pleased over every little detail now, as she had been indifferent before.

Time flies in the East—it shoots skyward on the wing of the swiftest lark in California. It seems no sooner noon than midnight. I can't account for it in any way except that the atmosphere here is so balmy and soothing that it kind of lulls your senses in a feeling of security that the next hour will finish your work as well as this—and the day is gone. To the visible senses this is never so true as when the afterglow sets in.

In the late afternoon, as the sun sets, the sky becomes gorgeous in its tints of gold, crimson, purple and blue, with all the colors radiating down the scale, beside. It seems more gorgeous than the sunsets of the East,

because the air is so rarefied that the eye penetrates the atmosphere so much more readily than where there is more density. At times, the west seems a flaming mass of fire encircled by a frame of gold; the whole picture hung on a tinted wall of blue-grey. Then succeeds what is called the afterglow. This is a reflection of the sunset, as it all dies away from sight, and is usually a beautiful golden glow, too exquisitely soft and æsthetic to really describe well. This does not remain long, and is succeeded by no twilight, as in the East, but night falls suddenly over every object. You think a part of the day is still left you, as you sit talking or musing in the afterglow, and lo! it is time to illuminate the house. Though more beautiful than anything we have in the East, it is treacherous.

And so, as I said, time flying fast brought about the time for the wedding. I'd had many a good talk with Mr. Earlham, for he felt no attention he could render me for what I had done would be too great. Sometimes I felt kind of guilty, taking his time from Angelina, but she would always laughingly tell me

that she had a lifetime of conversations with him coming, and I had only a few weeks. The more I talked with him, the more I liked him, and these are the only people worth while. Fine dainty linen is beautiful for show, but it's the homespun material you can depend upon for wear. Mr. Earlham was plain, sensible, homespun goods with the show of a genius in his line of work that comes from hard study and thinking.

The week of the wedding the house took on a new atmosphere. Decorators come to measure mantels and walls, for chandeliers and doorways was to be a mass of smilax and roses. It seems strange to an Easterner, but roses really do bloom every month of the year in California, and they was in luxuriant masses all around outdoors and in at the time of the marriage. All was pleasant bustle.

Then I sat down to think what I should wear to the wedding. The ceremony was to be performed in the Episcopal church which Angelina attended. I brought into view the gowns of my wardrobe. There was the black silk, but the idea of its being cleaned in coffee

seemed to make it a too second-best affair; the grey dress, though it was trimmed with terrible pretty passementerie, was too solemn-looking. Next I inspected a dark blue one trimmed with rose-color, and cast it aside. But I dwelt long on a lavender silk trimmed with green; and this I decided on.

This being disposed of, I was ready for any other business that presented itself to view. My quilt was finished, tied with a broad sash of crimson ribbon, and had been presented to my niece. She took it with heightened color—which made her look all the prettier—and thanked me warmly and sincerely. She said that nothing I could give her would please her so much as my own handiwork, for she was sure love for them both was worked into every stitch. And she was right.

The day at last arrived. Never a more beautiful day dawned in the world; never was there a more beautiful bride. Mr. Earlham thought so most of all. And he could stand some comments too, for with the return of that singing bird in his heart, love had give the color back to his face and the

fine light to his eyes. They was an ideal couple in every respect.

I was full of laugh and tears at the same time, when the big pipe organ began in soft strains of music that wonderful wedding march of Lohengrin's. I heard the swish of dresses in the distance. Then the tones of the organ grew louder and more triumphant, as though two souls had, through all difficulties, come to the fullest height of their happiness, and the sound of the dresses and footsteps come nearer and nearer my seat.

First come a little girl, dressed like a fairy, scattering roses for the feet of the bride to tread on. I sent up a quick prayer in my heart that they should never tread on anything else; but, maybe, after all, a life all of roses would make any one too weakly—we need the thorns to develop the resisting power. Then come the lovely Angelina on the arm of her father. Her girlish form showed to perfection in the magnificent toilette her mother had insisted on, and her veil fell in such soft folds that it looked as though it was caressing her. In her hand was beautiful flowers, and at her throat a diamond

brooch, the wedding gift of her father. But she seemed unconscious of everything and everybody—except one object before her. At the altar stood Mr. Earlham.

My eyes followed hers, and then I see him for the first time. If Angelina had looked rapt at him, he was looking the same at her. I don't believe either of them knew that another soul in the whole church was present. They held each other's eyes till he took her hand to lead her to the altar. Their soul communion was so perfect that it was really one soul in two bodies.

At this the organ stopped playing, for the bridesmaids, the matron of honor, Mrs. Wetherly, and groomsmen soon got into position, and the ceremony begun. When the minister got to the part of asking whether Mr. Earlham would take Angelina to wife, I wish you could have heard his voice as he said, "I do." It was determined triumph and satisfied love both in one. And her voice, though it sounded lower than his, was clear and positive as she accepted him for her husband. When Hezekiah give her away to Mr. Earlham, I just bowed my head forward and

held my lips tight shut, with my handkerchief, so I shouldn't make any noise, while the tears rolled down my cheeks.

As they knelt on the white cushions before the altar to receive the minister's benediction, I was glad I had come to California. The joining of such people is worth a whole life work.

In a minute after, the organ begun in victorious strains the wedding march that Mendelssohn wrote. Then Angelina and Mr. Earlham turned to the people two faces of deepest joy, and the rest of the party got into position to leave the church.

When they got to my pew, I couldn't help it—I looked at them both, and the joy of my heart burst its bonds—I says low but so they could both hear it:

"Glory!"

Mr. Earlham's eyes, as they looked down on me, was full of an affectionate smile, and I could see a tremor around Angelina's mouth.

Of course we all broke up, as soon as they got out of the church, to go to the house. I should modify that—they didn't all go to the house, but a great number did; for Hezekiah

I says low, but so they could both hear it, "Glory!"

and Lucy Jane was giving an immense reception to their only daughter.

In the house all was chatter. Everyone was laughing and talking all to once. Where Angelina and Mr. Earlham stood under wedding bells was the greatest commotion, and though both of them seemed delighted with the congratulations being showered down upon them, I couldn't help but think they would have had a deeper happiness in each other alone.

It was at the wedding I heard some terrible good news. Overhearing two society women talking together, I heard Mr. Grey's name mentioned. I wanted to know what was going on. For all I knew, he'd died of fright the afternoon he made his exit from Hezekiah's house. So I says to the women:

"I don't want to be intruding, but I thought I heard Mr. Grey's name. I ain't particular fond of him myself, but I'd like to know whether he's took crazy or died, or whatever it is that's happened to him."

Here both the women laughed right out, and one says:

"As far as we know, he's in the best of

health. But he wasn't able to stand all the fun made of him, and so he has left town. He bought a very beautiful home at San Bernandino and has taken the whole crew of women with him."

"What women?" says I, in amazement.

"Why, he run to the girl of the lace counter when he left here that afternoon, and whether it was through pique or real love, I don't know—but they were soon married. They say a happier girl never lived; and maybe she isn't as bad as she's been painted. I believe there was some of her relations in the bargain, too. Anyway, they're all delighted with the way things have come out!"

And so was I. I didn't have a thing against him now. If he never did anything else that was honorable in his life, he had saved himself from deserving the full title of scoundrel.

Angelina and Mr. Earlham left that same evening to make a tour of the East before starting for Europe. At least that's what they calculated to do. But I believe, knowing their temperaments so well, that when they got to some quiet and ideal spot, they settled down to enjoying the perfect compan-

ionship that knows no intermission when souls that are one are joined.

I went around for four days like a lost spirit, after Angelina and her husband left us. Then I couldn't stand it any longer. I packed myself on the train on which I am now writing to you.

Hezekiah, Lucy Jane and Dominie said they all felt terrible sorry for me to leave them. Dominie followed me around as I put my duds together, like a little dog.

When I started for the cars in the carriage, Lucy Jane and Hezekiah, as well as Dominie, went along.

When it was time to say good-bye, Hezekiah says:

"Now, Aunt Phoebe, you remember my invitation for next summer. I want you to go along with us as we travel over Canada. To me it's an unexplored country, and that Scotch second sight of yours will be a wonderful help to all of us. You've been a Godsend to us on this trip, and I don't doubt but what you will be on that."

And Lucy Jane echoed what he said, while Dominie put in:

"You know you saved us from being starved and scalped last summer, aunty, and I bet you'll do the same if you go with us next."

Really, this was the strongest argument any of them could put forth: that I might help. So I says:

"I don't dare mention such a thing to Ephraim for a good long space yet. He's been a hero to get on a whole year without me. But who can tell? I'd like awfully well to see all the sights I've read of in Canada. But what's to be will be. I wouldn't be the wife of a true elder in the Presbyterian church if I didn't feel so!"

And so it will. You can be sure, though, if I do go, I shall write you just the same from there as I have from here. Still, the idea of being with Hezekiah and Lucy Jane and Dominie, without any chance of seeing and talking with Angelina, will be terrible hard.

So this was the last I see of my relations. I think, on the whole, they are wiser and happier than when I arrived, which is to say a good deal for any year's work. Anyway, Angelina is in a heaven of bliss with her soul's companion. Of this I am sure.

The train is rattling along at such a pace that my lines are going up and down and the words running into each other, so I better quit. I want to drop this off at the next stop.

As I look out of the window and see the yucca and palms and cactus, and dash past orchards of orange trees with their fragrant blossoms and fruit, a spirit of regret comes over me in leaving all this beauty behind me. I know the prospect that lies before me—snow and gales and wintry ice! It is surely like stepping out of the Garden of Eden into a beauty-forsaken world.

Yet it's the magnet of love that draws me into all the forbidding aspects of the East at this time of the year. Ephraim is drawing me right along, and I can't get to him fast enough.

California is a place where every scene delights; and I've come to the conclusion that man here is not more vile than he is anywhere else. California is fading to view, and the station I'm to drop this at will soon be in sight, so I must hurry these last words.

Wedding bells, did I say? Their music is

sweet, but it's nothing to be compared to the music of bells of experience. This is what counts, when a marriage has been as happy as mine has been. Good-bye to California—but I shall soon be to home with my partner and you, which'll be full compensation for all I've had to go through.

Yourn forever,

PHOEBE ANN.

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